CARROLL O'DONOGHUE

CHRISTINE FABER

CARROLL O'DONOGHUE:

A TALE OF THE IRISH STRUGGLES OF 1866, AND OF RECENT TIMES.

CHRISTINE FABER,

Authoress of "A Mother's Sacrifice," etc.

Poor suffering Ireland! trampled long,
Still art thou theme of tale and song.

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PREFACE.

THE following story was written with the hope of contributing a little to that literature which seeks to delineate faithfully the Irish character,—the faults of the latter have served too often as a fruitful theme, while its virtues were either ignored, or so caricatured that they failed to be appreciated, or even understood.

While the genial and spontaneous humor of the Irish people remain almost without a parallel, that very humor sometimes seems to obscure or conceal the heart depths beneath it —the spirit of sacrifice for loved ones, the intense affection for kindred, the heroic, and, in many cases, cheerful endurance of wrongs they were unable to rectify.

Such are some of the kindly qualities of the Irish, though alas! at times marred by sad blemishes; but side by side with these faults are virtues rare and bright, and to depict these virtues, with the hope of winning just regard for a people so long suffering, has been the aim of the

AUTHOR.

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	—On the Search	7
II.	—A Singular Meeting	17
III.	—Carter's Proposal	26
IV.	—Captain Dennier	31
V.	—Mrs. Carmody	36
VI.	—A New Home	42
VII.	—Machinations	55
VIII.	—Father O'Connor	60
IX.	—The Dying Fenian	69
X.	—Shaun	78
XI.	—Carter's Tool	91
XII.	—Imprisoned	98
XIII.	—The Widow's Reply	104
XIV.	—Corny O'Toole	112
XV.	—Captain Crawford's Valet	120
XVI.	—Shaun objects to Dublin	128
XVII.	—Tighe a Vohr's Mouth-piece	134
XVIII.	—Carter's Insinuations	145
XIX.	—Disappointed	153
XX.	—A Street Arab	160
XXI.	—The Miser of Dhrommacohol	173
XXII.	—Carter visits Dublin	183
XXIII.	—Tighe a Vohr's proposal to his Mother	189
XXIV.	—Tighe secures a Horse	195
XXV.	—Mr. Canty	203
XXVI.	—Mr. Canty's Reception	209
XXVII.	—Carroll sees his Friends	215
XXVIII.	—The Race	223
XXIX.	—Tighe a Vohr's Sweetheart	233
XXX.	—A Startling Declaration	248
XXXI.	—Nora McCarthy's Sacrifice	257
XXXII	—Carroll's Trust in Carter	269

CHAPTER		PAGE
XXXIII.	—Father and Daughter	278
XXXIV.	—Rick's Discovery	286
XXXV.	—Carter Foiled	294
XXXVI.	—Tighe Explains to Captain Dennier	304
XXXVII.	—The Trial	306
XXXVIII.	—Carter Deluded	311
XXXIX.	—Inuendoes	320
XL.	—A Storm-tossed Soul	326
XLI.	—Tighe's Efforts to aid Captain Dennier's Courtship	332
XLII.	—Mrs. Carmody's Latin Letter	343
XLIII.	—A Singular Interview	349
XLIV.	—Carter Repulsed	360
XLV.	—A Criminating Paper	368
XLVI.	—A Bold Venture	377
XLVII.	—Cruel Treachery	386
XLVIII.	—Sacrifice Bearing Fruit	392
XLIX.	—Peace to a Storm-tossed Soul	397
L.	—A Happy Meeting	403
LI.	—Father O'Connor's Tale	407
LII.	—The Work of a Spy	430
LIII.	—Father and Son	438
LIV.	—The Summons to Dublin	444
LV.	—Carter's High Hopes	447
LVI.	—Carter Confronted with his Guilt	454
LVII.	—The Return to Dhrommacohol	470
LVIII.	—Convicted at Last	480
LIX.	—A Happy Restoration	489
LX.	—Corny O'Toole is Satisfied	494

CARROLL O'DONOGHUE.

CHAPTER I.

ON THE SEARCH.

In one of the wildest parts of Ireland, where mountain and morass, brush and woodland gave beauty and variety to the scene, a company of her Majesty's soldiers were slowly wending their way.

It was nearly sunset, and viewed in the mellow splendor of the dying day, the prospect had all that softened beauty which touches the heart with something akin to pathos, even while it wins to enthusiastic admiration. It seemed to have such an effect on the rough, bronzed fellows who were treading their way by the side of the morass, for, from murmurs at the fate which doomed them to such useless and fatiguing expeditions, and jokes at some of their companions who had been outdone in individual exploits by the rascally Irish, they had become suddenly silent, their eyes wandering from object to object of the beautiful scene, and more than one hardened face expressing the softened emotions of a soul long unused to any but lawless impulses. Their leader appeared the most impressed; his face, more youthful than any of his companions', was unmarked by the lines which indicate a reckless will and dissolute living, and his stern and piercing eyes had all the candor of a truthful heart.

His whole countenance was aglow from some secret feeling,

his step became slower, and at lenght, as if overcome by his strange emotion, he paused, and brushing his hand over his forehead, murmured audibly:

"What does it mean—what are these impressions I am trying to recall—are they only parts of a lost dream?"

Roused by a cough from one of his men, the craving of whose appetite had overmastered his desire to linger on the scene, he abruptly resumed his way, the glow fading from his face and his eyes resuming their stern and piercing expression.

The road began to grow more tortuous and unmarked, the scene itself to become more wild; night was descending, and even the stern and reticent leader betrayed a little anxiety as he glanced about him to discover, if possible, some cabin from which he and his men might be directed. None appeared in sight, and as he eagerly peered about him, the half suppressed murmurs of his men fell upon his ears.

They were approaching what seemed to be the ruins of some ancient abbey: arches, niches, and narrow pointed windows came dimly into sight, their very outlines suggesting thoughts of vivid and romantic interest. A few steps farther, and the broken remains of ancient tombs strewed their way, while the dense ivy that in some places entirely covered the moldering structure, imparted a weird and supernatural aspect to the scene.

Suddenly there emerged from behind the broken remnant of a wall which was once part of the castled dominions of the lords of Kerry a strange-looking form; bounding forward until it reached the side of the officer in command, it gave a cry so wild that every man of the little detachment was brought to a sudden and somewhat alarmed halt.

The form was that of a man of medium, slender stature, and a head much sunken between high, drooping shoulders; it was clothed in such grotesque garb, and the countenance expressed so much stupid bewilderment, that even the stern leader was provoked to a smile.

"Who are you?" he asked.

"Eyeh!" was the reply, accompanied by an idiotic rolling of the head.

Presuming that the strange being might be deaf, the officer repeated his question.

The man shook back the coarse hair that hung almost over his eyes, and stood erect.

"Is it who I am you're askin'? maybe it would be manners to tell me who ye are, seein' that ye don't belong to this part of the country at all."

Willing to humor the singular being for the sake of being guided perhaps to their destination by him, the officer replied:

"Well, my man, we are a part of her Majesty's —— Regiment, sent to Ireland to keep the peace between the Fenians and the queen's loyal subjects. We have happened to get in this confounded spot to-night because we have lost our way; if you will lead us back to the garrison at Tralee you shall be well rewarded."

"With what?" and the comically stupid look accompanying the question again provoked the officer's smile.

"With a good supper, and perhaps what you will like as well, or better, a glass of good whisky."

"I dun na," was the reply, "mebbe it's wanting me to turn informer you'd be when you'd get me into your clutches."

"No," was the answer, "that shall lie with yourself; if you have information which is of use to her Majesty's government and wish to tell it, you shall be well paid for it; but if you do not choose to do so you shall be free to leave us when you will, only guide us out of here."

The stranger still hesitated, gazing at each in turn of the men, who had somewhat forgotten their fatigue and their anxiety to reach their quarters, in the interest and amusement afforded by this novel scene.

"Will you pledge me your word of honor, then, that you will do me no harrum, neither now nor again?" he said at last, turning his eyes full upon his questioner, and extending a brown, knotty and horny hand. Captain Dennier of her

Majesty's ——, shrunk a little from the proffered grasp; his fastidious taste and innate haughtiness could hardly yield to such close contact with the being before him, and it was a second or two before he suffered his own aristocratic, shapely hand to lie in the horny palm.

"It's to the garrison you want to go," pursued the strange man; "well this is the road to Ardfert, and Tralee is a good five miles beyant,—but follow me, and I'll have you there in no time, or my name is not Rick of the Hills." Rick's "no time," as he had expressed it, lengthened itself to what seemed to the tired and hungry men an undue period, and at moments when there seemed to be no termination to the tortuous path, and no more sign of habitation in the wild spot than there had been at the beginning of the journey, Captain Dennier and his men grew impatient, and even a little anxious lest their wild guide might be playing them false.

"Look here, my man," the captain said at last, "there's something wrong about this; you are not keeping your word with us."

"Whisht!" was the reply, accompanied by a gesture commanding silence, "don't let your voice be heard in this place, or maybe you'd have more company than would be to your liking."

The officer, though a man of tried courage, quailed for a moment at the words of his guide. His hand sought the hilt of his sword, and his eyes tried more anxiously to pierce the gloom of the night. All the wild stories which he had heard, even over camp-fires in India, of the places of concealment afforded to the Irish by the very wildness of their country, and of the lengths to which desperation occasionally drove them, came before him now. His fears for the instant roused into fancied being a hundred lawless, despairing wretches swooping down from the very hills beside which they were walking, and hurling death to every man of the little party. Then also, the disturbed and excited state of the times, owing to those troubles to which Irish grievances have ever, under

some form or other, given being, arose before him in vivid and distressing pictures. Wild reports of an anticipated general Fenian rising had already reached him, and knowing that they were in that very part of the country where the young and daring Captain O'Connor secreted his followers in the fastnesses of the mountains, he became each moment more certain of being attacked.

Rick of the Hills, a little in advance of the soldiers, kept steadily on his way. He seemed so sure of the road, tortuous as it was, that he looked neither to the right nor to the left of him, and only occasionally peered ahead.

The path at last became broader and widened into one that appeared to lead into some hamlet or town. The soldiers, relieved from the oppression, gloom, and wildness of the scenes of the last few hours, recovered their spirits, and their leader, recognizing by certain landmarks that the garrison-town was not far distant, ceased to grasp his sword.

They arrived at the barracks, from one quarter of which as they approached they could hear the sound of distant revelry. The step of the guard as he paced his rounds was lost in the quick, heavy tramp of the approaching band. A halt was demanded, the countersign given by Captain Dennier, and the soldiers, with Rick in their midst, passed within the barracks.

"I am much obliged to you, my man," said the captain, turning to the strange guide as his men were about to file into the guard-room, "and you shall have all that I promised." His eyes turned for a moment as if in search of some attendant to whom he might consign Rick, and at that instant a man in civilian dress, who had been standing in an angle of the wall watching the scene with peculiar interest, darted forward and responded as if in answer to the officer's look.

"I know something of this man, captain; I will take charge of him."

"Oh thank you, Carter, then I transfer him to you; you know the ways of the barrack sufficiently to provide for his

being treated well, and being permitted to leave when he will;" and Captain Dennier turned away.

The man addressed as Carter beckoned Rick to follow him. They traversed a long hall until a turn brought them into a narrower and shorter passage, from beyond which came plainly the sounds of uproarious mirth. Here he who had been addressed as Carter stopped suddenly, and wheeling round upon his companion, just where the light from a pendent lamp brought his round, red face and constantly working eyes into distinct view, he hissed rather than said: "You devil's imp, what brings you here?" Rick shook himself erect, and going so close to the speaker that his breath fanned the latter's countenance, he answered in a tone of mingled passion and defiance:

"To watch you, Morty Carter, and to foil your ends."

"You'll never do it; you and them you're serving shall feel the weight of my fury—I have sworn it—do you understand? and I would come from my grave to have revenge on Carroll O'Donoghue."

"Spare yourself," retorted Rick, "for you'll fall yourself into the trap you're layin'; you thought to win when you gave the information which set them beyant," making a gesture toward where he had left Captain Dennier's men, "on the search they were after when I met them. But did you succeed? Have a care, Morty Carter, that your treachery doesn't betray yourself into a worse pit than that you'd dig for those that never harmed you."

The round red face glowering beneath the lamp grew more florid, and the hands hanging by his side clenched and drew themselves up as if they would have felled the audacious speaker. "What proof have you that *I* gave the information?" he hissed.

"This proof—you were at Carrick Hurley's the other night—you swore to die in the cause you intended to betray, and then you came straight here and gave the information which sent Captain Dennier and his men on the search they were

after to-night, and only the boys were on the watch, the soldiers would have caught another fox than the one they went to hunt."

"What do you mean?" said Carter.

"I mean that Carroll O'Donoghue would have been in their clutches but for the watch of the boys."

Carter staggered against the wall, his face becoming of an ashen hue, and his hands falling helpless by his side: "Carroll O'Donoghue here!" he exclaimed, "in Ireland—good God!"

"Yes, here to bring you to an account," pursued Rick, striding to him; "here to see that justice is done to the innocent beings you would rob; here to give the lie to your actions. What have you to say now, Morty Carter?"

"This," said the latter, straightening himself, and seeming to recover his previous arrogant manner: "I shall be as a hound upon Carroll O'Donoghue's track—I shall unearth him, though he were hidden miles under ground, and I shall hunt him to his death."

The sounds of mirth each moment more continuous and prolonged, now swelled into shouts of laughter, which a suddenly opened door sent with startling distinctness to the ears of the two angry speakers, and fears of some unbidden spectator coming upon the scene made both men anxious to withdraw. Warned by approaching steps, Carter turned in the direction of the boisterous merriment, closely followed by Rick.

In a moment both men were within the canteen whence the laughter proceeded; it was a large, irregularly shaped apartment, against the walls of which, on wooden shelves, stood various pewter mugs and quarter pitchers, while about the room in scattered places were several beer casks. The soldiers themselves were dispersed in groups, those who had formed a portion of Captain Dennier's company being distinguished from their companions by certain marks which they bore of their recent journey. The majority seemed to be drinking, and it was from those who appeared to be most

under the influence of the potations that the boisterous mirth proceeded.

Deep in the mysteries of the stimulating cup, no one appeared to notice the entrance of Carter and his companion till the former had ushered Rick into the midst of one of the noisy groups, and had repeated the instructions of Captain Dennier. The soldiers, half in their cups, gazed with amused interest on the uncouth-looking being introduced to them, and one, eager to provoke fun out of the strange character, said with a tone of cockneyism, "So you are one of these d—— Hirish that we are hexpected to ketch, are you?"

A look of intense disgust passed over Rick's features, and his deep-set eyes gleamed beneath their shaggy brows while he retorted,

"And you are one of these Hinglish" mimicking the other, "that didn't ketch us yet, though you're scouring the country this while back."

The half-maudlin soldier was nettled by the reply; rising from his seat, he said in a tone that he strove to render authoritative: "Look here, you feller, be careful how you speak to one of her Majesty's soldiers."

"Then do you be careful to be civil to your betters," answered Rick, nothing daunted.

Carter, knowing the outspoken and vindictive character of Rick of the Hills, and fearing a quarrel which might result unpleasantly to himself, stepped between the wordy combatants, and with a whisper to the soldier quieted him. He dropped into his seat, but not without a glowering look at Rick and a muttered:

"The next time we meet you shall know what it is to have cheeked an English soldier."

Rick promptly responded: "And the next time we meet may be you'll feel what it is to have insulted an Irishman."

Carter, now really alarmed, savagely caught Rick and foxed him out of the group.

"You imp of the devil, do you want to destroy yourself,

that you are talking in this manner?" but in so low a tone that no one save Rick heard him.

"I want to destroy you," was the whispered reply, "and the evidence that dooms me will twist the hemp for your neck—do you mind that, Morty Carter?"

Carter did not reply; but, summoning one of the soldiers, bade him prepare a meal for Rick, and afterward assign him a place to sleep.

* * * * * * *

In an apartment in another portion of the barrack, entirely removed from the soldiers' quarters, Captain Dennier, still in his marching attire, and with the dusty marks of his recent expedition not yet removed, stood in respectful attitude before an elderly officer of imposing presence.

The latter was also standing, but he seemed to have assumed the attitude rather in the heat of his speech to the young man, and his fingers played nervously with the ribbon of some decoration upon his person.

"It is exceedingly discreditable, this continued ill success of yours," he said in an irritated tone, "and I warn you to speedily redeem it; nothing could be clearer than the clew with which this fellow Carter furnished you, and he has the most important testimony to bring forward as soon as you capture your prey."

Captain Dennier's face flushed hotly, but he made no reply.

"Here am I," continued the senior officer, "hurried over from England to find after all that her Majesty's soldiers are unequal to the task of unearthing a few poor rampant Irishmen, who have more bluster than brains. And here is another dispatch."

He drew toward him one out of a loose packet of papers that lay upon a table, and tendered it to the captain. The latter read aloud:

"A convict, Carroll O'Donoghue by name, has escaped from penal servitude in Australia, and is supposed to be con-

cealed in or about Cahirciveen. Let a sufficient number of men be detailed to search and guard the place, and let all precautions be taken to prevent the escape of the convict by sea."

The captain replaced the paper without a word.

"You must be ready, sir, to undertake that expedition to-morrow," said the senior officer.

A bow of assent was the reply.

"And let it be your effort to cover by its success your failure of to-day."

With a wave of his hand he dismissed the young man, and throwing himself into a chair, turned wearily to the packet of papers lying before him.

CHAPTER II.

A SINGULAR MEETING.

In one of the loveliest spots of Ireland, where lofty mountains looked protectingly down on a green valley that wound about them, and, in the distance, the white line of a broken and rock-girded coast gleamed in the sun, stood one of the better class of country cottages. Its white-washed exterior, and the care and taste shown in the garden surrounding it, bespoke for its interior unusual neatness and thrift.

An English officer, sauntering with careless gait, though his face would seem to betray the existence of anxious and perplexing thought, paused as he neared the cottage, and looked admiringly on the tasteful surroundings. Thence his eyes wandered to the picturesque scene beyond—the mountains, the shore. A short distance away, on the other side of a narrow stream, stood a large dark stone building; it looked strange and isolated, and its apparent massive strength, together with its shape, would give something of the impression of a deserted castle.

With his curiosity aroused, the officer walked more briskly, and, arriving at the cottage, he found the door broadly open. Within, an attractive-looking, Irish girl was spinning, her back to the entrance at which stood the interested spectator, and she was singing as she worked. It was a simple ditty, but one so plaintive, and trilled out in such an exquisitely sweet voice, that the soldier feared to make a motion lest he should interrupt the strain.

When it ceased he knocked, but so timidly that the girl did not hear him. He ventured to repeat the sound; she turned shortly, without, however, pausing in her work, and bade him enter.

"Pardon my intrusion," he began, "but I wished so much to know the name of this charming spot, that I have ventured to enter."

"The name of this charming spot," with an amusing mimicry of his own words, "is Dhrommacohol."

She still continued her work, not even glancing at him, and somewhat embarrassed by her indifference, he hesitated a moment before he said:

"I want to go to Cahirciveen, but I confess to some curiosity to learn a little of this romantic-looking place before I am directed thence."

"If you will take my place at the spinning-wheel, I will bring some one to you who will answer your questions."

She stopped her work and looked at him now, but in a provokingly defiant manner, her dark eyes brimful of suppressed mischief, and her mouth curving into a half sarcastic smile.

The officer was completely nonplussed; he glanced at his hands for an instant, without knowing why he did so; they were white and dainty compared with her red, but small and shapely ones.

The Irish lass was growing every instant more tantalizing.

"Don't," she said, observing his hasty glance at his hands; "it might put them out of shape."

In sheer desperation he attempted to work the spinning-wheel as he had seen her do, but peal after peal of merry laughter greeted his awkward attempts. Her Majesty's officer was never in such a trying position—better could he have borne the fire of a dozen muskets than the taunting mirth of this provoking girl, half-menial though he suspected her to be. His face flushed, and the perspiration rolled from his forehead, yet fear of more severe ridicule prevented him from resigning the humiliating task.

"Go and tell your mistress," he said, "that I would like to see her."

"My *mistress!* umph!" she repeated; "and what name shall I give to my mistress?" with provoking emphasis on the last word.

"Captain Dennier, of her Majesty's —— Regiment."

"Captain what?" with an air of amusing stupidity, as if the name was too difficult for her to pronounce. Almost irritated, he was about to repeat it, but she interrupted:

"Don't trouble yourself to say it again—I shall *describe* you to my mistress, and that will do."

What that description of him would be, and especially what it would be of him as he appeared in his present position, the aristocratic captain too well knew; and as his vivid imagination pictured the mirth which perhaps another provoking Irish girl would have at his expense, he was tempted to curse the fate that had led him to Dhrommacohol, and his own folly that had placed him in such a position.

"He mistakes me for the servant," muttered the girl, laughing to herself, as she hastily repaired to an upper chamber.

There, engaged in graceful needlework, sat a young woman some years the senior of her who so hurriedly entered, but so fair in face and form that she seemed out of place amid her neat though homely surroundings.

"Oh, Nora!" burst out the new-comer, "I have the funniest sight in the world to show you—one of Queen Victoria's officers spinning our linen."

"What!" was the almost affrighted exclamation; and the young lady addressed as Nora dropped her work and stared almost aghast.

"He mistook me for the servant, and he wanted to be directed somewhere, and to learn something of this beautiful spot; and he was so elegant-looking, and so courtly, that the thought just popped into my head to put him at the spinning-wheel, for a bit of revenge, you know; so I told him I'd bring my mistress to him, and she would answer all his questions. He gave me his name, Captain Dennier, of her Majesty's —— Regiment. Oh, Nora! he makes the drollest sight at the wheel!"

"Now, Clare! how could you do such a thing; it was positively unkind!" and the lovely speaker looked reprovingly at the laughing girl.

"How could I do such a thing?" was the reply, in a tone that increased in spirit with every word, "I could heap confusion and shame upon every one of them who left us as we are, who took from us the hope and comfort of our lives; but the English, I hate them, and I could crush them."

She looked the personification of her ardent and bitter feeling: her slight, small form drawn to its full height, her cheeks flaming, and her dark eyes alight with all the fire of passionate emotion.

Nora rose, and putting her arm about the angry girl drew her to her.

"Hush, Clare; did not you promise Father O'Connor, only the other day, that you would strive to quiet these bursts, that you would be more Christian, more forgiving?"

"I know it," half sobbed Clare, "but I cannot help it; the very sight of that man as he stood in the doorway seemed to rouse my most bitter feelings."

"Then we shall go down immediately, and apologize to him for the indignity to which he has been subjected," said Nora, quietly.

"Never!" vehemently answered Clare, withdrawing from the arm which still clasped her; "if you will have so little spirit, Clare O'Donoghue shall not forget that *she* is one of the trampled and outraged Irish."

A sigh was the only response from Nora, and flinging about her a white shawl which had dropped from her shoulders on rising from her seat, she prepared to descend to Captain Dennier. Clare dried her eyes, shook down her curls, which had been fastened in a massive twist at the back of her head, unpinned her dress, that had been gathered about her for greater convenience in her work, and followed.

The captain had ceased his awkward attempt to spin, but he remained standing by the wheel, with one hand resting upon the latter. The absence of his messenger seemed unaccountably long, and in much trepidation he watched the door by which Clare had gone for her mistress.

A rustle of a garment, and the loveliest woman he thought he had ever beheld stood before him; a woman so fair and fragile-looking that for an instant one might deem her some supernatural visitant. The white shawl draped gracefully about her was hardly whiter than her face, but the transparent hue was not that of disease, but a complexion that had never been touched by a foreign sun. Her jet-black hair twisted in heavy bands about her head and her large, black, pensive eyes rather increased the ethereal look of her countenance.

The officer, in his surprise at this unexpected vision, remained standing by the spinning-wheel, and he did not recover his self-possession till the lovely new-comer, advancing to him, said in a sweet, low voice:

"Captain Dennier, I presume, one of her Majesty's officers; permit me to apologize for the prank which my mirthful companion has played upon you in requesting you to spin." Clare had arrived in time to hear the apology, and standing on tiptoe behind Nora, who was considerably taller, so that her face, charming in its setting of short, clustering brown curls, looked over the latter's shoulder, she interposed:

"And permit me, Captain Dennier, to introduce to you my *mistress*, Miss McCarthy, and to say that it is against my will that any apology has been made to you."

Nora's hand was over Clare's mouth, and Nora herself was blushing till her forehead and neck were scarlet.

Captain Dennier, with an effort, recovered his self-possession. Bowing low, he said with persuasive grace of manner:

"Pardon, ladies, my apparent intrusion, but the beauty of this charming spot tempted me to enter, in order to inquire about the interesting objects I saw, as well as to ask my way to Cahirciveen. I should particularly like to know about that building which stands out so picturesquely before us." He pointed through the open window to the dark, solitary edifice which had attracted his attention before entering the cottage.

"That," answered Nora, sadly, "was once our home, but the estate becoming encumbered by debt has passed from our possession; it is now in the market to be sold."

"Yes," spoke up Clare, at the same time withdrawing from Nora so that the latter's hand might not restrain again her impulsive speech, "and tenantless, it stands a memento of that oppression which would take from the Irish even the shelter of the poorest home. We, to whom each spot of the old house is so dear, cannot now pass its threshold."

A shade of sadness crossed the officer's face, as if some chord had been struck in his own heart which responded to the wounded and bitter feelings he had aroused in Clare. He advanced to her, saying gently:

"Let not the wrongs my country may have done your land be a reason for enmity between us as individuals. We at least may not hate each other, and I assure you on my word of honor as an officer that I admire and revere the virtues of many of your country people."

Clare retorted quickly: "And yet you are down here on her Majesty's commission, to capture and to hound to death many of those whose virtues you say you admire and revere; how consistent are your remarks!"

"Pardon me," he broke in, now warmly desirous of establishing himself in her good opinion, "and listen to me. I cannot disapprove the putting down of rebellion by my country, however much I may deplore the suffering it entails on the poor victims of foolhardy patriotism."

"Enough, sir!" answered Clare, her eyes flashing, and her lip curling with scorn; "you have suffered contamination by coming here; my brother is one of the victims of foolhardy patriotism, and for it he is now a penal convict in Australia."

She turned away, her anger giving place to a passionate burst of tears, and they could hear her sobbing as she ascended to her own apartment.

"Good heavens! what have I done?" and the captain's unfeigned distress was pitiable. "Plead for me," he said to Nora; "tell her I did not mean to wound her feelings; tell her that I crave a thousand pardons."

"Pray do not trouble yourself about it," answered Nora,

gently. "Poor Clare has had so much to suffer in the loss of her home and the arrest and sentence of her brother that her feelings easily overpower her. Forgive her, and think kindly of her."

"Forgive her! it is *I* who should crave forgiveness; it is certainly enough to hunt your countrymen as we are doing, without entering your homes to force you to believe in the righteousness of our work."

A form darkened the doorway—a tall, spare form in clerical dress, and with the attenuated face which speaks of long self-denial and mortification; but there was a kindness and sweetness in the pale, thin countenance, and a look of Heaven in the soft, deep brown eyes, that won high and low alike to gentle, saintly Father O'Connor.

Nora flew to him.

"Oh, father! Heaven must have sent you in; our poor Clare is in one of her unhappy moods, innocently caused by this gentleman;" and then with simple grace she introduced Captain Dennier, and in a few words gave the substance of the difficulty.

The gentlemen clasped hands on the introduction with more mutual cordiality than perhaps would have pleased easily-excited Clare, had she witnessed it. On the part of the priest the kindliness was prompted by the truest charity, combined with an involuntary admiration for the officer's frank, manly bearing; on the part of Captain Dennier the cordial grasp was prompted by a sudden and irresistible attraction for the priest, as if something strangely apart from himself had roused within and impelled him to seize the extended hand with a vise-like pressure, and look into the pale thin face with all the eager and mysterious longing of a restless and unhappy soul. The strange gaze was not unobserved by Nora; she noted it even while she was explaining the recent singular events, and she noted also in that exchange of looks, how like in color and shape were the eyes of both young men; the expression differed, the priest's eyes wearing a look of

Heaven in their intense softness and kindliness, while those of Captain Dennier flashed out bold, keen glances.

"Have Clare hasten to see me, then, for I am on my way to Rossbeigh, and cannot delay. I have just seen Father Meagher, and he told me there had been trouble there between some of the people and the soldiers; that one or two poor fellows had been wounded, not dangerously, however, and as he could not see them for some hours yet, he asked me to take his place."

At that moment Clare appeared, her face still hotly suffused, and her eyes showing traces of her recent violent weeping.

"I heard your voice," she said, advancing to the priest, "and fearing you would be in your usual hurry, I hastened to see you."

"And one result of your seeing him," spoke Captain Dennier, gently, and with some embarrassment, "will be, I trust, to forgive one who has been so unhappy as to offend you."

His whole bearing, at once so noble and so respectful, for the moment won Clare's impulsive heart; the next instant, however, she scorned herself for even this involuntary yielding to the detested foe of her country. Father O'Connor's eyes were upon her, with their tender, reproachful glance, which she had never yet been able to withstand, and she repressed the sharp words almost upon her lips, and answered instead:

"I know not why you crave my poor forgiveness, but since it is so, though I shall still regard you as the enemy of my country, I grant what you ask—I—" in a faltering voice, and with a deep-drawn sigh, "I—forgive you."

"And I thank you," responded the captain, with another of his low and graceful bows.

"I cannot remain longer," said the priest, "and if you, sir, desire to go to Cahirciveen, I can guide you part of the way; my journey will lie somewhat in that direction."

The officer, though reluctant to leave the ladies, in whom

he had become strangely interested, still gladly accepted the clergyman's offer. With a kind adieu from Nora, and an amusingly formal one from Clare, which he courteously returned, he took his departure with the priest.

CHAPTER III.

CARTER'S PROPOSAL.

CLARE O'DONOGHUE acted strangely after the departure of the visitors: she avoided Nora, and continued to wear such an unusually thoughtful and preoccupied air, that had not Nora herself been deeply absorbed in curious thought about those same visitors, she would have wondered at Clare's manner.

Poor Clare! she was strangely unhappy and remorseful—unhappy that the very memory of the admiring and deferential notice of the handsome officer should still linger in her mind, and remorseful that she had suffered him to leave without according him a more generous pardon. Her cheeks burned with scorn against herself, and she went about the little household duties, which she voluntarily performed, with a fierce energy born of her own disturbed mind.

Another knock sounded at the cottage door; this time it was no timid rap, but a bold, peremptory signal that proclaimed the right to demand an entrance. Clare opened to the new-comer, but started back with an expression of alarm in her countenance.

"Good day, my dear," said a coarse, thick, blustering voice. "Maybe I'm not as welcome here as I ought to be, seeing the start you gave when you saw me; but I'll forgive you in consideration that things'll be better in the future."

The speaker ushered himself into the apartment—a powerfully-built, coarse man, with a large, round, red face, and little, gray, constantly-winking eyes. He was dressed in flashy garb and wore a massive gold chain pending from his velvet surtout.

Clare had regained her self-possession, and with it her wonted spirited manner. "To what are we indebted, Mr Carter, for this early visit? I thought your business in Tralee was to detain you for a month or more."

"So it was, my jewel, so it was; but business of more importance came up last night, and brought me down here to-day. I must see Miss McCarthy privately for a few moments; so do you just send her to me, and keep out of the way yourself for a little while."

Clare drew herself erect.

"I shall do no such thing, Mr. Carter—leave you alone with her to insult her by another proposal of marriage—never! It is my duty, in my brother's absence, to protect Miss McCarthy, so I shall be present at any interview you may have with her. We have no secrets from each other."

"Easy, my darling, easy, and listen to me. I'm not the villain you'd make me. I'll not hurt a hair of Miss McCarthy's head, but I *must* speak a few words to her privately. Just tell her, and see if she doesn't consent herself to the interview."

Clare reluctantly ascended to Nora, and Mr. Carter threw himself into a chair and began to pull sundry papers from his pocket.

"It's tough business," he muttered, "but I'll have to do it; and, faith, if that doesn't bring her to her senses, I'll——" His soliloquy was abruptly ended by the sudden and noiseless entrance of Miss McCarthy. She stood before him in such exquisite beauty and queenliness of air that he became disconcerted, and utterly forgot the speech he had prepared for her. He rose and made repeated ungainly bows, while his florid face deepened in hue, and his stammering efforts to say something were so violent that the perspiration rolled from his forehead.

"I understand that you wished to see me alone," said Nora coldly; "pray state your business briefly."

Exasperated by her *hauteur*, Mr. Carter recovered somewhat from his confusion. Wiping his face carefully, and

drawing repeated long breaths, while his little ferret-like eyes winked furiously, he responded:

"Yes, my dear Miss McCarthy, I do wish to see you on *most* important business, and I'll be as brief as I can. The last time I mentioned something to you you indignantly scouted it, you scorned myself and my offer. This time——"

Nora interrupted him:

"Pray, Mr. Carter, spare yourself; I cannot and shall not listen to such language as fell from your lips the other day; to do so would be criminal on my part, and it is criminal in you to compel me to listen to such utterances, knowing as you do that I am the affianced of Carroll O'Donoghue."

Carter wiped his face again—a very necessary proceeding, for the perspiration was streaming from it.

"Hear me," he said; "if you refuse me this time, not even a roof shall cover your head. I have here the papers which shall drive you and that hoyden, Clare O'Donoghue, out on the charity of the world; if you accept, you shall be a lady, with all that your beauty and your own sweet self are entitled to; you shall do what you will, only marry me, Nora McCarthy."

He was down on his knees before her, a task which the tightness of his clothes and his own large form rendered awkward and somewhat difficult.

The girl shrunk from him, her lip curling with intense scorn, her eyes flashing out their horrified loathing.

"Get up, Mr. Carter; such a position ill becomes you, and know, once for all, I fear your threats as little as I regard your promises. Send us out, if you will, on the cold charity of the world; its charity will be warm and tender compared to the fate of being your wife. Do your worst. I have no feeling for you other than pity for your poor, shrunken, sinful soul."

She turned her back upon him and walked in her queenly way toward the door. Discomfited and enraged, but neither humbled nor daunted, Mr. Carter rose and strode after her.

"Mind," he said hoarsely, "you told me to do my worst,

and I'll do it. I came here to-day prepared to shield you and those you have your heart in, but now both you and they shall feel the weight of my anger. Maybe one day *you* will kneel to *me*, Nora McCarthy."

She had gone from the room, without even a glance at him.

He clutched the papers, still in his hand, like a madman, and darted from the cottage. A tall, dignified form in the plain black garb of a Catholic priest was approaching.

"Why, Carter, what in the world is the matter with you?" spoke up the hearty voice of the pleasant-faced clergyman, as the two met: "you seem so flurried, and I thought this part of the country wasn't to see you for a while yet; what has brought you down here now?"

Carter doffed his hat, and strove to conceal the evidence of his late passion.

"I came here, your reverence, in the interest of the O'Donoghues."

"Ah!" said the priest, with a peculiar intonation of voice; "let us hear what your great concern in their welfare would do for them this time. I fear your interest in them is taking a very peculiar turn."

"Does your reverence doubt me?" asked Carter, striving to assume an air of injured innocence.

"I am not quite sure that I ever fully trusted you," was the reply, "though charity has made me blind in some instances; but there are strange stories about you lately. How did you become on such intimate footing in Tralee garrison, that you are well known there, I understand, and well received by even the officers; and what is this which Clare O'Donoghue tells me of your proposal of marriage the other day to Miss McCarthy? Surely, Carter, your assurance and pretensions do not rise to such a summit as that!"

Carter winced beneath the sarcasm of the rebuke, and he had much to do to restrain an insulting retort.

"I got a footing in the garrison that I might serve the boys in the places about—that I could warn them when there was

danger, and give them information that would help them in their plans. And as for the other matter," assuming a supplicating look and tone, "can your reverence blame me if my heart went where many another heart in the country would go if it only dared—to lovely Nora McCarthy? I will make her a lady, father; she shall have comfort and wealth for the rest of her days; perhaps your reverence would speak for me."

"Never, sir!" burst from the priest in righteous indignation; "sooner would I read the burial service over Nora McCarthy's coffin than ever consent that she should become your wife."

Carter could no longer control himself. "Then that roof which covers her now shall shelter her no more. She shall go out the pauper that she is, she and Clare O'Donoghue—I have here the tool of eviction." He shook one of the papers in his grasp.

"My home shall be open to them," replied the priest, "and may Heaven forgive me, Morty Carter, for my past trust in you. I but followed the reliance which that good man, Cairn O'Donoghue, now gone to his rest, placed in you; but when I pledged myself to be ever the friend and adviser of his motherless children, I did it, deeming that you, as their legal guardian, would be as true to your responsibilities. If through my too simple trust in you I have unknowingly permitted you to do them any wrong, may God forgive me, and may He forgive you, Morty Carter!"

The priest turned away in the direction of the cottage which Carter had just left, and the latter, looking after him in speechless rage, muttered:

"That's the way, is it? I'm found out, am I? then, begorra, it's my turn now. I'll have my revenge; there's nothing to stop me. The affianced of Carroll O'Donoghue, is she? maybe when Carroll O'Donoghue hears something he won't be so ready to claim her as his affianced, even if he should get the chance to do so."

CHAPTER IV.

CAPTAIN DENNIER.

"This must be the way he meant," soliloquized Captain Dennier, as he paused in some perplexity at the head of a path leading directly to the shore; "he said I could walk along the strand for a mile or more before making a turn;" and at length having settled the matter, he went briskly on. Strange thoughts warred in his mind. The unaccountable impression produced by the first sight of Father O'Connor, and which had deepened during their conversation while they walked together, added to the singular interest awakened by the two lovely Irish girls he had so recently left, seriously disturbed him. He looked abroad on the fair land, mellow with sunshine, and felt again all those emotions which had so stirred his soul an evening or two before. He summoned his native pride to his aid, his loyalty to that country of whose people and whose prowess he was wont to vaunt, and he strove to persuade himself that his fealty to the British crown was undiminished. The sea-breeze fanned his face, and that it might cool his fevered brow, he lifted his cap and walked with it in hand along the shore.

There was not a person in sight, nor a habitation; bold rocks lined the way; and impelled by the wild feeling within his own breast for a wilder and more completely isolated scene, he clambered down the rugged declivity, and walked where the sea almost touched his feet. Now picking his way over clumps of damp sea-weed, now springing from bowlder to bowlder, and again pausing to peer into some cavity in the rocks, the officer came suddenly upon a man sitting idly on one of the stones. A long gray overcoat covered his person,

while a wide-brimmed, low-crowned hat almost entirely concealed his features. The officer halted in some surprise.

"Halloo, stranger!" saluted the man, looking up from under his slouched hat; "how do *you* come in this place?"

"I'm on my way to Cahirciveen," was the reply, "and I turned a little out of the road to enjoy this wild scenery of yours."

"Ah! it is grand, is it not?" and the speaker jumped nimbly up.

"Perhaps you have come some distance, and are fatigued," he continued. "We of the coast here are always provided," drawing, as he spoke, from the pocket of his overcoat a small canteen, and proffering it to the officer.

"I have come from Dhrommacohol."

"Dhrommacohol!" the man in the gray over-dress repeated eagerly.

"Yes; and it was my good fortune to meet there two of your lovely countrywomen."

"Their names!"

"Miss O'Donoghue, and Miss McCarthy."

For an instant the anxious questioner touched his hat as if in his eagerness he would have thrust it entirely back from his head, but he suddenly recovered his caution, and dropped his hand to his side again.

"Which do you prefer; which to you was the lovelier of the two?" he asked in a voice that trembled slightly.

"Miss McCarthy is the lovelier, but I prefer Miss O'Donoghue."

"Ah!" There was a deep breath as of relief from the questioner, and his voice was steadier as he answered:

"I do not admire your taste; the whole county rings with Miss McCarthy's beauty and goodness."

"I grant you that," said the Englishman, "but to me, there was something indescribably charming in the spirit of Miss O'Donoghue."

"Oh, aye! she has enough of spirit; the whole parish is aware of that."

"You seem to know them intimately," said the officer.

"Every one about here knows them," was the somewhat evasive reply. "And now let us drink their healths."

In turn they quaffed from the canteen; then the officer drew out his watch and asked if he could reach Cahirciveen before nightfall.

"Easily," was the reply; "keep to the walk above here for a half mile; any one will direct you then. I would be myself your guide, but I have not the time at my disposal."

"Oh, that will do, my dear fellow; the way is so plain now that I cannot mistake it."

With a friendly adieu they parted, and in another moment Captain Dennier had lightly climbed the rocks again, and was walking briskly on the path above.

The strange man looked about him on every side, far out to sea, where shadows of an approaching storm seemed to lie on the deep waters, and immediately around him, where only the rocks and the murmuring waves met his view. In this watching and listening attitude he waited until he deemed sufficient time had elapsed for the officer to have passed far from the scene; then he bent almost to the ground, and putting his hands to his mouth, gave a peculiar whistle. It reverberated among the rocks with a startling shrillness, and brought out of one of the stony recesses the lithe figure of a man—lithe and not ungraceful, despite its ill-fashioned, almost grotesque garb. A shaggy overcoat, much too long and wide, flapped about his person, and a battered hat comically fastened on the side with a loose knot of what had once been a gay-colored ribbon, but which was now of the dingy hue of the hat itself, covered his head.

With his face toward the ground, he listened for a moment as if expecting a repetition of the whistle; then catching up the flowing skirts of his ample coat, and giving his hat a firmer thrust on his head, he bounded along the rocks with the speed and agility of a mountain goat. The form in the gray over-dress stood on the top of an elevated bowlder, on an ap-

parently keen and anxious watch, but at the first sight of the being springing amid the rocks, it descended.

"I heerd the whistle," spoke up the new-comer, "just as me heart was growin' onaisy that I didn't hear it afore."

"I couldn't give it sooner, Tighe, for a little after I arrived here a soldier came this way on his road to Cahirciveen. I deemed it best to be friendly, and he stopped awhile. Then I wanted to give him time to be well gone."

"Aye," answered Tighe, "he's one of the blackguards, I suppose, that's up there now at Cahirciveen—didn't I hear all about it an hour ago? Sure the queen has full news o' yer escape, an' these fellows have been sint to Cahirciveen to arrest you, bad scran to thim! Mebbe this one that you've been talking to has his suspicions about you, an' that it's back he'll be comin' with a lot more o' the scurvy pates."

"I don't know, Tighe, but he seemed a right good fellow."

"Ah, masther dear, you can't thrust any o' 'em—tail an' hide, they're all the same, an' the sooner you're out o' this place the betther."

"Any time, Tighe, only I must see Nora before I fly for good; I must see her to-night, then I shall be as prudent as even you can wish me to be."

"Tatther an' ages! was there iver the bate o' this?" and Tighe in his vexation almost danced upon the rock. "Would you be puttin' yer neck in the halther afore it's made for you? You can't see her to-night; sure they'll be havin' scouts from the rigiment in ivery direction, an' it'ud be as much as yer life is worth to go near Dhrommacohol. Och, masther dear, put yoursel' once more under me biddin'; the boys is waitin' beyant wid a boat, an' we'll smuggle you to Amerikay. Sure I'll tell Miss McCarthy on me bended knees o' the love you have for her, an' how you thought o' her day an' night."

"It won't do, Tighe, my faithful fellow, it won't do. Nora McCarthy is so wound about my heart that I must have one

sight of her, however brief, and one sound of her voice to give me nerve again."

Tighe gave a vigorous thrust to his battered *caubeen*, and dashed his hand over his eyes.

"Manage this for me," continued the speaker, "as you have managed many another affair for me. Under cover of the darkness I can steal to Dhrommacohol, see Nora and my sister for a few moments, and then, Tighe, my faithful, tender Tighe, I will do whatever you wish."

There was no resisting that appeal, accompanied as it was by the winning look of eyes that had all a woman's softness in their depths, and Tighe hung his head and answered with a crestfallen air:

"Sure it's well you know I can't refuse when you ax in that way; but it's to your death you'll be goin'. Ah then, when I followed you to that far counthry, an' you made your escape from the prison there, did I think you'd be as onthractable as this? But niver moind,—I'll sthrive me best to manage it, an' if you're ketched, an' you have to die, why then, Tighe a Vohr 'll die alongside o' you."

CHAPTER V.

MRS. CARMODY.

A MILE distant from the cottage in which dwelt Nora McCarthy and Clare O'Donoghue, there stood one of the better class of Irish country cottages; while there was little evidence of care in the patch of ground surrounding it, there seemed to be unusual thrift and neatness within. A bright turf fire emitted its cheerful blaze, and the earthen floor was tidily swept. An attempt at a dresser had been made in one corner of the room, and upon a portion of it shone numerous brightly-scoured tins, while the remainder was well stocked with ware, many of the pieces, however, being broken, but so placed that only the good side of each was visible. In the opposite corner rested a settle now arranged as a bed, with coarse, but clean coverlet and pillow; an open door revealed a smaller apartment, evidently a sleeping room. A tidy, florid Irish woman, with her black dress pinned about her, and her gray hair covered by a spotlessly clean cap having huge frilled borders, stood beside a table, peeling potatoes. She seemed to be absorbed in deep and not very pleasant thought, for sometimes she shook her head ominously, and after intervals she muttered such stray sentences as the following:

"I niver had an aisy moment with him, an' I'm afeard I never will. The Lord betune him and harrum, but where can he be at all, at all? Six months this very day since I laid eyes on him. Maybe it's in want of a male's mate he is this night; oh, if I thought so——"

She suspended her work to brush the tears from her eyes. The door was suddenly flung open, and some one bounding

wildly across the floor caught the astounded old woman with a clasp that threatened to stifle her.

"Mother, mother! did you think I was dead? sure I'm not—I'm here, your own Tighe, back again."

There was another embrace that threatened ruin to the starched frills of the spotless cap, and utter annihilation of their wearer. She struggled to escape, and when at length she succeeded in becoming disengaged from the huge folds of the flapping coat, and was assured that her fears had all been groundless, and that her scape-grace son was there in the flesh, and well and hearty, her affection for the time being yielded to indignation. "You vagabond! what do you mane by such tratement to yer poor old mother? It wasn't enough to be breakin' my heart wid your hunts, an' your fairs, an' your fights; to have Father Meagher tellin' me that you wor the greatest scape-grace in the counthry, but you must break my heart intoirely by goin' off the way you did, without as much as lavin' a line to say where you wor."

"Is it a line o' writin' you mane?" asked Tighe humbly.

"You omadhaun! what else is it I'd mane?"

"Sure how could I lave that, when my edication just stopped short o' the power o' bein' able to write at all? Now, mother, listen to me an' I'll tell you about it—it bates Bannaher. You won't listen, an' you won't recave me?" as she turned her back and seemed about to go into the inner room; "then I'll say good-by to you foriver; mebbe it's killed I'll be to-night where I'm goin', an' then you an' the counthry 'll be rid of the scape-grace."

He pretended to hurry to the door, well knowing that she would follow him. She did so, flinging her arms about him.

"Come back, Tighe, my son! I will listen. Sure my heart was brakin' while you was gone, an' ivery day I fixed yer room the same as if you slept in it the night afore. Look at it!"

She drew him to the inner apartment; though poor almost to bareness, it was clean and neat, and there had been even

some attempt at taste in the disposition of bows of bright-hued calico on a kind of dressing-stand that occupied one corner. Tighe encircled her with his arm. "You wor always a good mother, an' you desarve a betther son than I am; but come now till I tell you, for I'll have to be movin' soon."

She would have busied herself in preparing a meal for him, but he insisted upon having her undivided attention; so taking a seat where she could look fondly into his face, she smoothed the rumpled frills of her cap, and prepared to listen.

"You know, mother, how heavy me heart was for the masther afther they thransported him."

"I do, my poor boy, I do."

"Well, I couldn't rest, an' unbeknownst to you or any one, only Shaun, who seemed to understand it all, I used to take long walks by the say-shore, an' I used to picthure to mesel' the lonely jail he was in afar from us all. Begorra, I couldn't stand it, an' I said to Shaun one day, 'I'll go to him, Shaun, if I swim the ocean, I'll rach him some way,' an' the dog looked in my face as if he was a Chresthen and jist knew what I was sayin,' an' barked; I made up my mind from that minute. I moinded how I used to hear them tell in Mrs. Leary's public house of a part of Ireland where big say ships sometimes touched. A quare thought kem into me head, an' I acted on it. I made sthraight for the part they mintioned, mesel' an' Shaun, an' afther a few days I kem to a fishin' village. I tould the people a story about mesel' that won them complately, an' Shaun, what with his thricks an' his affection, he took their hearts intoirely. But I soon found the times there wor changed; big say ships niver touched there any more, an' me heart got heavy agin, only Shaun, somehow, had a way of lightenin' it; he'd look in me face with that look of a Chresthen, an' wag his tail, an' bark, an' somehow I'd take courage.

"At last good luck kem in my way. Shaun and mesel' saved one of the fishermen's childhre from drownin' one day whin a big wave was carryin' it away foreninst us, and the poor

father was so thankful that he said there wasn't one thing he would not do for me."

"'Faith,' said I, 'there's one thing that if you'd do it for me, I'd be the happiest man alive.'

"'An' what is that?' he asked.

"'To get me off to Austhralia.'

"'I'll do it,' he said, 'if I'm a livin' man.'

"An' he was as good as his word, mother: he tuk me to England himself, in his own little fishin' smack, an' by spakin' a word for me here an' there among some of the sailors that he seemed to know purty well, afther awhile I found mesel' shipped for Melbourne as one of the hands, though the sorra much knowledge I had of what that meant—faith it was as an omadhaun in airnest I tuk the place, an' they had more spoort out of me than they iver got work.

"It 'd take too long, mother, to tell you all that happened afther I reached Melbourne—how by dint o' beggin' an' blarneyin' I made me way across the counthry till I kem at last to the jail where the young masther was. It tuk long days an' nights o' watchin' afore I could make him know it was me was near him, but I did at last, an' somehow afther that good luck was on our side. I got to be on sarvice at the jail, an' I med fun for them till I kem to be a soort of favorite among them, officers an' all. Like the people on the ship, they thought me a harrumless omadhaun, an' they didn't much moind what I was about. But all the time I was thinkin' an' plannin' an' prayin'—yes, mother, on many a night whin I'd look up to the stars an' away to the say that parted me from ould Ireland, an' whin at the same time I'd think of the broken-hearted young masther so far from all he loved, I used to dhrop on me knees an' ax God to deliver him.

"Well, there kem a night at last when we stood together outside the prison walls, an' afore mornin' we wor out on the ocean. There wasn't wantin' friends to help us, an', though the hue and cry was raised, we landed safe in Ireland, an' we're here for the last three days, down at Hurley's, where

the boys meets, watchin' the signs o' the times, an' waitin' to know what to do.

"The masther is for stayin' an' takin' his chance agin with the rest of the lads, but they've raised the sarch for him, and moreover, they're scourin' this very part of the counthry in such a hot way that it'll be betther for him to lave at once. Some of the boys that'd die to save him coaxed him to fly the counthry entoirely, an' I begged him on me two knees to go. It wasn't one bit o' use; he won't stir a foot till he's seen Miss McCarthy. So to-night he'll make the trial to see her, an' whin he laves her they'll have a boat ready for him. Do you now, mother, go up to the cottage an' prepare Miss McCarthy an' Miss O'Donoghue for his comin'."

The kind-hearted old woman had been weeping silent tears during the recital; now she dried her eyes very vigorously, and shook her head.

"There's a power o' sorrow come to the young things. I was there to-day, an' Miss Clare told me how they'll have to give up even the cottage that shelthers them. Father Meagher had just been in afore me, an' he had made them promise to come at once to his house. They wor preparin' to go, for they wor in mortal dread of ould Carter."

Tighe sprung from his seat.

"By the powers, mother, you don't mane that Morty Carther is decavin' the masther."

"I do that same; an' more betoken, there's many a black story tould about him lately."

Tighe folded his arms and dropped his head upon his breast; he was evidently in very troubled thought. His mother did not disturb him, but continued to dry her eyes and to shake her head.

"Well," he said at last, as if speaking to himself, "it'll onnarve him intoirely whin he hears this." Looking up, he continued in a different tone: "Go to thim anyway, mother, an' tell thim the masther'll be at Father Meagher's as soon as the night is rightly settled; an' now good-by; mebbe you'll see

me afore long, an' mebbe it'll be awhile afore you'll lay eyes on me agin ; but don't recave me in the scoldin' way you did this evenin'."

He caught her in a quick, hearty embrace, and was gone before she had recovered from its effect.

CHAPTER VI.

A NEW HOME.

ALL that Father Meagher's tender, priestly heart prompted he did to make the two orphans welcome and happy in his humble, but neat and cheerful home; and both girls having repaired to the little chapel, and there laid their griefs at the foot of the sacred altar, returned to the priest's house, at least quite resigned, if not comforted. There were no more tears on Nora's lovely face, and Clare's heightened color alone betrayed her excited thoughts.

"Sure *I* know how hard it is," spoke up pretty Moira Mognahan, Father Meagher's niece and deft maid-of-all-work, a merry, impulsive girl, who had no care beyond the charge of her uncle's simple household.

She had shown the ladies to their apartment, and with the privilege of long and intimate acquaintance, she had entered, and had stood toying with her apron-strings while they put off their outer garments.

"Didn't I feel dreadful bad, when Tighe went off the way he did," she pursued; "an' don't I keep hopin' an' prayin' that he'll come back soon, and ——" She was interrupted by a loud knock at the front door.

Without waiting to finish her sentence, she bounded down the stairs, and in a moment they heard her in excited and joyful conversation. When she returned, her eyes were aflame, her cheeks glowing; she danced up to the two ladies who were sitting together.

"Oh, I have such news for you, such news! I begged Tighe's mother to let me tell you. Mr. O'Donoghue is back from Australia; he's in Drommacohol now, and he'll be here

to-night to see you both; an' Tighe is home; he was at his mother's this afternoon. Oh, my heart will burst with joy!"

Nora McCarthy became deathly pale, and swayed for a moment in her chair as if she would faint, while Clare half started from her seat and looked in a bewildered way at the speaker. Then both girls turned and gazed at each other. They seemed to realize at last the full, glad purport of what they had heard, and throwing themselves into each other's arms, they burst into happy tears.

They would learn the story from Mrs. Carmody, Tighe a Vohr's mother, and they repaired to the little parlor where the old woman excitedly told her tale. Expatiating on Tighe's "wonderful natural smartness" in managing the escape, and making many an amusing digression and embellishment, she gave at length the substance of Tighe's story; and she thought herself well rewarded when both ladies kissed her and mingled their happy tears with her own.

Father Meagher entered in the middle of the exciting and joyful scene, and the glad tidings were told to him by every voice at once. His kind old eyes grew moist with the emotion he could not suppress, and his delight at the prospect of so soon beholding the escaped convict was as keen as that of the two young ardent hearts beside him; but his manner was not entirely free from anxiety; Nora saw it, and she whispered, while Clare was engaged with Mrs. Carmody:

"You foresee danger, father, Carroll will incur a great risk by coming here; perhaps you have heard something while you were out."

The priest replied in as low a tone: "A company of soldiers have arrived at Casey's, and they seem to be bent on something; now that I have heard about Carroll's escape, and his intended visit here, I fear their arrival has to do with him."

Nora's face blanched.

"Oh, father! he must not come here; we will send him word of the danger."

Father Meagher shook his head.

"If he is in Dhrommacohol now, as Mrs. Carmody says, he is already in the danger; but probably there are those about him who will watch for and warn him; besides we know not to what precise place to dispatch a messenger. Cease your alarm; God, who has so well aided and protected him thus far, will not abandon him now. Pray, my dear child, and all will be well."

There was hardly need of the admonition, for her heart was incessantly sending up petitions for him about whom every fiber of her being had wound itself, and now, as she turned away that her fear might not communicate itself to Clare, her lips were faintly murmuring: "Oh, my God! save him."

Mrs. Carmody gladly accepted Moira's invitation to remain for the evening, and under pretence of arranging for the secret reception of his expected guest, Father Meagher concealed his ominous anxiety. Nora repaired to the chapel, there to strive to banish her gloomy foreboding, and to gain by prayer the calm she so sadly needed; her overwrought imagination was lending the wildest terror to her fears; she saw Carroll snatched from her even before he could make this stolen visit, and she saw him doomed this time, not to a life imprisonment, but to the horrible death of the gallows; she caught his last agonizing glance; she heard the last words of his dying lips, words which told of his faithful affection for her; and utterly overcome, she sobbed aloud on the little chancel rail beside which she knelt. She had supposed herself alone, for the sacred place had appeared to be quite deserted when she entered; but a form had been kneeling in the rear of the church. On the entrance of Miss McCarthy, it had crouched so low that it could not be seen; now, at the sound of the sobbing, it lifted itself, and peered eagerly forward. It was that of a man of slender stature, with a head sunken between his shoulders, and covered with an abundance of thick, shaggy black hair.

"My God!" sobbed Nora, confident that she had no lis-

tener save Him who was inclosed in the little tabernacle, "accept the sacrifice I have made of myself; I do not ask to be ever his wife, I do not ask to be spared any suffering in this world, but I beg Thee to spare him—he is so young, so good. Save him from this danger that threatens, and then do with me what Thou wilt. Thou knowest how much I owe to him and his—his dead father, his loving sister. Oh, my God! save him."

The listener in the back of the church stood erect, placing his hand behind his ear, as if to catch more surely the words which floated to him; but she was silent after that burst, and in a few minutes she left the chapel.

The strange man walked forward to the altar; with that peculiar, quick, half-bend of the body with which the Irish peasant recognizes the presence of the Blessed Sacrament, he bent his knee as he neared the humble little chancel rail, and began to strike his breast.

"O God! what brought me here at all, when I know I'll have to do it; I'm in his power, and he'll squeeze the heart's blood out of me. She said in her prayer that she didn't ask to be spared suffering for herself, but if she knew what was coming to her—oh God! how can I do the dirty work?"

He beat his breast more violently, and dropped to his knees, bowing his head till his face well-nigh touched the floor, and his scalding tears mingled with its dust. There was a sound of some one entering, and hastily rising, he departed.

Buoyant, impulsive Clare, reveling in the expectation of being once more folded to her brother's heart, steadily put aside every fear that came for his safety; he had escaped from Australia, he was there in Ireland near them; and what though a price was upon his head, and keen scouts abroad to secure him, he had eluded them all thus far, and the trusty friends who had already aided him would effect, as they intended to do, his final escape to America. Thus Clare assured herself, and she went about the little house assisting Moira, and chatting with Mrs. Carmody in such a merry-

hearted mood that Father Meagher studied all the more to conceal his anxiety from her.

Moira was equally mirthful, and Nora looked at the happy pair and tried hard not to let the gloom of her own sad, longing heart throw any shadow upon them.

* * * * * * *

The night for which so many hearts yearned came at last; it was dark as the faithful lads watching by the coast could wish, and it threatened to be wild and stormy. The wind rose in fitful gusts, and swept at intervals round angles and through crevices with the wild hollow shriek of a soul in pain. It was a night to make man and beast hasten to shelter, and Carroll O'Donoghue and Tighe a Vohr buttoned their coats closer about them, and bent their heads before the blast, as both walked quickly and silently forward on the road to Dhrommacohol. Not a sound save that of their own hurried footsteps, and the shrieking of the wind as it came madly down from the mountains, broke the stillness, and the darkness was so intense that they could not see a pace ahead.

Neither was in a mood for conversation. Carroll, wrapped in the thought of her whose memory never left him, and rejoiced at the prospect of so soon beholding her, forgot for the time even the faithful companion at his side, and the danger into which he might be hurrying, while Tighe, too heavy-hearted to yield to the natural humor which no trouble heretofore had entirely suppressed, was absorbed in his own anxious thoughts.

The cautious signal which Tighe gave at the back entrance to Father Meagher's little house needed no repetition; Moira and Mrs. Carmody had been on the watch there a long hour, not daring to open the door and look forth, lest spies might be lurking in the darkness, but they had remained to listen for the first sound of him whom they expected, while Father Meagher and the ladies kept similar watch near the front entrance. The back door was opened wide to Tighe's gentle tap, and Moira in her wild delight forgot her prudence and gave a scream of joy.

"Whisht!" said Tighe, putting his hand over her mouth, and quickly shutting the door, "you'll bring the counthry on us."

The scream had brought the little party from the parlor, Father Meagher first, Nora, white and trembling, in the rear.

"My own boy! home again. Thank God!"

The escaped convict was folded in the priest's arms close to the heart that beat with all a father's love for the young fellow so full of generous impulses and noble daring; he could feel the tears of the tender-hearted clergyman as for an instant their faces touched, and his own eyes were misty when he turned to embrace his sister.

Nora still modestly lingered in the rear; indeed, her trembling limbs would scarcely bear her forward; but Carroll, impatient to greet her, released himself from Clare and advanced to her with outstretched arms; in that long, warm clasp of hands, in that gaze of each into the other's eyes, though no word was said, their *souls* spoke, and Nora's full heart could have sobbed itself out in very joy, while Carroll would have braved again all his past hardships for such a moment of happiness.

There was a sudden exclamation of terror from Moira, and she pointed excitedly to the window. She had been standing close beside it, listening with a pretty archness to Tighe's tender speeches, and she averred that she saw a form flit by it; she could not say whether man or woman, but she was sure that the shadow of some one had crossed the panes. No one else had perceived it, but no one else of the party had been looking in that direction. Alarm became immediately visible on every face, and Nora shrunk closer to Carroll's side, as if she would strive to protect him, while Tighe seized his hat, which he had thrown on the floor on his entrance, and thrust it upon his head.

"Lave it to me, father," he said, turning to the priest, "to learn if there's a spy about; an' do you all go up-stairs, an'

be quiet till I come back. Mebbe it's only a notion of Moira's, afther all."

"It is not," protested Moira, "I saw it, and——"

But Tighe had gone out into the dark, windy night. The priest led the way to the parlor, and seated between his sister and his betrothed, Carroll O'Donoghue told in a subdued voice the story of his escape, and how the latter was due to the faithful affection of Tighe a Vohr. But every whistle of the wind made the girls start and shudder, and even Father Meagher, touched and interested as he was, and anxious to conceal his own alarm, cast hurried, uneasy glances toward the door.

Tighe came back to reassure them: "Not a h'aporth was to be seen of any one. It must be all Moira's own notion."

Pretty Moira would have pouted at another time to be deemed so fanciful, but Tighe's assurance had made her too happy now to assume any of her wilful airs.

"I have not had time even to welcome you, Tighe," said Father Meagher, advancing to Tighe a Vohr and extending his hand. It was caught and shaken vigorously, then dropped, and Tighe stood twirling his hat and looking down in awkward bashfulness.

"Look up!" said the priest, "and let me thank you for all you have done for our poor lad."

"Don't, yer rivirence—I couldn't stand it—it'd unman me intoirely to have *you* thankin' me. I didn't do anything but what me heart tould me to do; but I'll make bould to ax one thing," looking up with a sly glance.

"Ask anything, Tighe."

"If you'll say, in the presence of me mother here, that you have hopes of me yet. She thinks you have none, because of my wild doin's, an' mebbe if you tould her she was wrong, it'd be a consolation to her when I'd get into the next skrimmage."

"You are the same Tighe a Vohr," said the priest, with a low laugh which he could not restrain; "but I can give your

poor mother the assurance you wish—you'll be a steady fellow one of these days, when you see the folly of putting your heart into such vain things as fairs, and fights and races."

"Faith, father, I'll never lose the love for them things till my heart is held somewhere else," and he looked slyly and archly at Moira, who tried to frown him into silence. The priest affected not to understand him, and Moira slipped into the kitchen, where Tighe speedily followed her.

"To go off without a word," she pouted; "and I'll engage, too, that you never thought of me all the while you were away."

"Not think of you!" protested Tighe; "do you see that?" pointing to the knot of discolored ribbon on his faded and worn hat; "do you mind the time when I tuk that from your hair where it lay like a—like a—" At a loss for a simile, he scratched his head and looked about him—"like a poppy in the midst of a cornfield. Do you mind how you fastened it where it is now? well, I never moved it, an' I never will till you give me another an' a betther keepsake."

"It's easy enough to *say* all that, Tighe, but if you meant it, you wouldn't have left me in such dreadful suspense. How did I know but those horrid soldiers had caught you, and transported you too?"

"No, my darlin', I thransported myself for the masther's sake; an' now don't be torturin' that purty face of yours into any more crass looks—they're not becomin' at all. Sure I'm here now, ready to ax your pardon on my knees an to swear that I'll never lave you again without tellin' you all about it afore I can spake a word to you."

A loud, peremptory knock sounded at the front door. The little party in the parlor and the two in the kitchen started in terror. Tighe rushed to the door, and listening a moment hurried to the parlor.

"Hide the masther! it is the soldiers. Quick, quick!" Moira's wits were awake and keen.

"This way."

She pulled Carroll with her in the direction of the kitchen. Nora and Clare, terror-stricken, stood dumb and motionless. Father Meagher waved them back to their seats, and the knocking being renewed with greater force, he ordered Tighe to open. Carroll had disappeared with Moira, and Tighe, satisfying himself by a hasty glance that there was nothing to awaken suspicion in the postures of the occupants of the room, went to the door with a heavy step.

"Open, or we'll break the infernal thing in!" shouted a gruff voice, and the menace was accompanied by a shower of blows that threatened to demolish the door itself.

"Aisy," answered Tighe, as he proceeded with provoking leisure to make several feints of opening to the soldiers. "It's a quare time of night you come breaking into the clargy's house," he continued, "like a set of *scrawneens* as ye are that niver knew what it was to be about dacint business. If I was the masther here, I'd give you the right about with a blessin' that mightn't mane good luck to you."

"Open the door," thundered the gruff voice which had spoken before, and a tremendous rap that made the door shiver and Tighe himself start back in some affright, accompanied the words.

"Will you open the door, or must I do it myself?" ordered the priest in severe tones.

"Sure, father, I'm doin' my best; but there's a ketch in the bolt—bad cess to yez!" as the blows began to shower again, "but ye're the onmanageable lot, there!"

He flung the door open so suddenly and widely that two of the foremost of the soldiers who were close against it fell headlong into the little entry.

"It's down ye ought to be," said Tighe, contemptuously surveying his fallen foes, as they hastily and with visible mortification in their faces struggled to their feet. The priest stood on the threshold of the little parlor.

"To what, gentlemen, am I indebted for such an unseemly visit?"

The noble poise of his dignified, venerable form, the calm, firm tones of his voice, and the kind, gentle expression of his face, brought into full view by the rays of the entry lamp, pendent above him, somewhat abashed the fierce and impetuous soldiers now crowding into the little passage-way. They drew back, and seemed glad to make deferential way for one who approached from their rear. Bowing low to the priest, and with a grace that savored more of court than camp, he said:

"I regret, reverend sir, to be obliged to make so unseemly and untimely a visit, but duty compels. From direct information received not two hours ago, we believe an escaped Fenian convict to be secreted in your house. We have come to search for him."

Father Meagher retreated a few steps into the parlor; the officer followed, motioning the soldiers back, and in a moment he stood in the presence of Nora McCarthy and Clare O'Donoghue.

"Captain Dennier!" burst from both the girls, and the officer, though much and somewhat painfully surprised, responded to the recognition with his usual inimitable grace.

"I shall not intrude farther," he said to the priest, "if you will say that the person of whom we are in search is not in the house."

Had he looked, the pallid face and quivering lip of Nora, and the changing color and hurried breathing of Clare would have given him the information he did not desire to receive, but he kept his eyes averted as if he feared to betray his own painful embarrassment.

Father Meagher evaded the momentous question.

"You see here," he said, two young friends who, having been evicted from their own home, have consented to accept the shelter of my humble roof, and if you think that it also covers the person for whom you are looking, you are at liberty to search; I give you free access to every part of this little dwelling. "Moira,—" he called to his niece with the hope that her quick wit would enable her to direct the search without ex-

posing the place in which she might have hidden Carroll. But instead of Moira's answer, there was a shout from the soldiers who were left on guard without the house, and in another moment the recaptured Carroll was led into the parlor.

Finding no place of effectual concealment in the kitchen to which Moira led him, and fearing to compromise the priest, should he be found in the house of the latter, he determined to risk the chance of an escape by the back entrance; for a few yards he was safe, owing to the darkness, but a keener scout than any of the redcoats would have proved to be scented his trail; the alarm was given, and the soldiers on guard quickly seized their prey.

Captain Dennier started back in strange dismay. At the sight of the prisoner a singular expression came into his face. One by one he was linking all the occurrences of that eventful day together, and he was learning for the first time that the Australian convict brother of Clare O'Donoghue, the manly, genial stranger whom he had met on the rocks, and the escaped convict for whose recapture he had been specially detailed to Cahirciveen were one and the same person. Interested, more than interested as he was in the wilful, spirited Clare, swayed by impulses more favorable to the Irish cause than to British supremacy, he shrunk in bitterness of soul from the duty which was now his. He shrunk, and yet in the same moment he loathed himself for this seeming weakness. To restore himself in his own estimation he assumed a sternness of mien utterly foreign to his present feeling, and turning to the foremost of his men, he motioned him forward.

"Bind the prisoner."

The order was given in cold, even tones that betrayed not by the faltering of a syllable, nor the motion of a muscle, what it had cost to utter the words.

Carroll O'Donoghue stood erect, and extended his hands for the manacles. The priest turned aside, his head bowed almost to his breast, and the trembling of his form telling how

deeply he was agitated. Clare, violently excited and indignant, could control herself no longer. She sprung to her brother's side; she caught his manacled hands in her own, and with her eyes full of passionate tears that threatened each moment to become a sob, she said to Captain Dennier:

"He is my brother; he is the sole protector of two poor orphan girls, and yet you command his arrest; this, then, is the sequel of your intrusion into our home a few hours since, the intrusion you so deeply regretted,"—spoken with an accent of intense scorn—"the intrusion for which you made so humble an apology; and you prayed to have no enmity between us as individuals;" her voice quivered with sarcasm, "you *deplored* the suffering entailed upon us poor victims of your country's oppression. This act shows how deeply you *deplore* it."

"Hush," interposed Carroll, "you are talking wildly; this officer is but doing his duty."

A slight flush colored the captain's cheeks, but it was the only sign of how sharply her words had cut him.

"Remove the prisoner," he ordered, in the same tones he had previously used, and withdrawing a little as if he somewhat feared the effect of his command.

The soldiers started forward to obey the order; one of them, annoyed at the delay which had already ensued, seized the young man roughly. Clare wound her arms about him, and Nora at his side could only look the appeal she had not the strength to make.

"A moment—give me a moment to convince this poor girl that I must go," said Carroll, as he strove to detach himself from his sister's embrace.

"You are making matters worse for me," he whispered to Clare; "let me go."

She obeyed him, and threw herself sobbing into Nora McCarthy's arms.

Carroll knelt at the feet of the clergyman. "Bless me, father."

The priest's voice shook with emotion. "God bless you, my brave boy! may He ever bless you, and give you strength to do the right."

The soldiers closed about him; from the threshold he raised his manacled hands in a sad farewell, his eyes resting last and longest on his weeping betrothed.

Captain Dennier also turned to say farewell. "Accuse me of being stern and cruel, if you will," he said, looking at Clare; "but I could not be false to my principles, to my honor; I regret exceedingly the painful part I have been obliged to perform, and I beg you in calmer moments to think more kindly of me."

They departed, Tighe a Vohr following in their wake

CHAPTER VII.

MACHINATIONS.

THE storm continued, growing each moment in fierceness; torrents of rain accompanied the shrieking wind, and at intervals, when a temporary lull ensued, and the elements seemed to have ended their strife, it was only to break forth again with more appalling fury.

During one of these lulls a man started up from a hedge by the road-side, as if he had been seeking protection from the storm; but he also seemed to have had another motive than shelter, for instead of looking for a more desirable covert, he stood in the attitude of listening. The night was too dark to discern even the outline of a passing form, but the brief subsiding of the tempest enabled him to hear distinctly, and just as the wild strife of the elements was about again to begin, he heard approaching the hurried tramp of men. Veering to the side, he waited until they had passed, recognizing by their voices, and fragments of their conversation, consisting mostly of anathemas on the storm, that they were English soldiers. He dropped into the train, the darkness screening him from observation.

Drenched, and heartily tired from their conflict with the wind and rain and the toil of a journey over a difficult road, the party halted after a half hour's march at a sort of country hotel. It was of rather pretentious size for the unassuming little country place in which it was situated, and bore evidence in its well-lighted windows and broad, illuminated doorway, of unusual accommodation for wayfarers. Into this building passed Captain Dennier and his men with their prisoner, and closely followed by Tighe a Vohr. He who had surreptitious-

ly joined them kept in the shadow, but in such a position that, without being himself seen, he could observe the men as they passed within the portal. When the door was shut upon the last of the soldiers, he turned suddenly and walked back as rapidly as the storm would allow him, by the road he had just pursued. He needed no light to guide him on his way, and the elements beating about him were in unison with the battle waging in his own heart. Hatred, remorse, and a wretched feeling of despair made him sometimes fling open the tattered coat that covered his naked breast, and lift the well-worn hat from his shaggy head that the wind might cool his inward fever. After intervals when his thoughts grew maddening in their intensity, a curse or a groan escaped him, and he clenched his hands and beat his bosom in fruitless agony.

Thus journeying, he arrived at length on the outskirts of a village. Threading the deserted streets with quickened gait, he stopped before one of a row of plain little cottages. Raising the latch, he gave a peculiar signal; it brought at once to the door a man in a gaudy dressing-gown, and with coarse sandy hair bristling from under a nightcap. The light shining from an adjoining apartment revealed him distinctly.

"It's time for you to arrive!" was his salutation, as he admitted the new-comer. The latter scowled.

"Have a care, Morty Carter, for I'm a desperate man to-night. I did your dirty work, and I've come for the reward you promised."

"Easy, now, easy, and we'll see. Come in here, and we'll talk the matter over."

He led the way to tne open room, seating himself at a little table covered with papers in disordered arrangement, and motioned his visitor to a chair near. Then, appearing to notice for the first time the dripping condition of the latter, he rose, and going to a cupboard, brought forth a bottle and glass. Pouring out an unusually large quantity of the liquor, he tendered it to his guest. It was angrily pushed away.

"You'd play on my weakness again, as you did many a toime before. No, I'll have none of it until you come to terms. I've done your work, your divil's work, an' now am I to see Cathleen, or not?"

He rose in his fierce eagerness, bending across the table till his hot breath and the steam from his dripping garments unpleasantly assailed Mr. Carter's sensitive nostrils.

"Sit down, man, and don't be so unreasonable. Give me time to think, and tell me how you succeeded—but no; I'll not hear a word from you, and I'll not speak one word to you, until you take that to keep out the cold you'll get after this wetting. Take it, Rick." He held the glass almost to the miserable creature's lips, and spoke in a coaxing tone. It was a tone so foreign to him, and it was assumed with such awkward grace, that he to whom it was addressed laughed in mockery.

"When did you oil your tongue so, Carter? but you're wasting its sweetness on me."

Carter quelled his rising passion by an effort, and again tendering the liquor, he said, less persuasively, however: "Refuse it or not as you will, but you'll get no answer from me until you take it, and until I hear what you've done; nor shall I listen to you until you drink it." He set the glass down where the tempting fume could ascend into the face of the poor, half-famished wretch, and folding his arms, stood back in a resolute attitude. The temptation was strong to one who had not tasted food for hours, and the sparkle of the liquor as it lit up the glass, and its stimulating odor, conquered Rick of the Hills. He raised the tumbler and quaffed its contents at a draught. Morty Carter smiled; then he stepped forward with alacrity, and resumed the chair he had left.

"Now tell me, Rick, how you succeeded."

"I went, as you told me, an' prowled unobserved about the priest's house till I saw Carroll O'Donoghue an' Tighe a Vohr go in; then I posted away to Casey's an' told Captain Dennier. It wasn't long till the soldiers were at Father

Meagher's, an' keeping guard outside the house as well as in it; Carroll tried to escape by the back door of the kitchen, but I spotted him, an' gave the alarm to the soldiers that were almost next him. After that, I waited on the road till the soldiers passed with him, then I followed, an' watched them all go in to Casey's."

Carter rubbed his hands. "Well done, Rick."

"Aye, it's well done for you, Morty Carter, but it's hell's own work for me; my soul was black enough before, but how is it now? I tell you,—" roused into his old fierceness by the tenor of his thoughts—"I'll do no more of it. Tell me where Cathleen is, an' I'll beg my way to her. You promised to tell me if I succeeded in this; keep your word."

"Never fear me, I'll keep my promise; but I've a word or two more to say. But drink, man, to keep out the cold."

Again he poured from the bottle, and again, more easily tempted than before, because of his recent potation, poor, miserable Rick quaffed the contents.

"Do you see, now," resumed Carter, drawing his chair closer to his visitor, and speaking in a confidential whisper, "it'll not be safe for you nor me till Carroll O'Donoghue is hung—the evidence is pretty sound against him—and then the property will be mine, and may be her dainty ladyship Miss McCarthy wouldn't mind becoming Mrs. Carter."

Despite Rick's rapidly increasing maudlin condition, there arose within him amazement and indignation at such an aspiration on the part of his companion, and he started from his chair, but finding himself too unsteady to stand, he sunk into it again.

"She wouldn't look at you, Carter, if you had all Ireland to your back; and I'd be sorry if she would."

Again Carter, by an effort, controlled his rising anger.

"May be she won't be able to help herself; may be she'll be glad to accept me when she knows——" he stooped forward and whispered in Rick's ear. It had the effect of completely sobering him for a moment. He jumped to his feet, this time able to stand without even the support of the chair.

"Are you man, or divil, Morty Carter, to plot the like of that? And do you think I'll lend myself to that scheme for you? I did as bad for you twenty-five years ago, but it wasn't the hellish work then that it would be now. No, you'll never count on me for that; and the tongue that would utter that lie ought to be blasted forever."

For an instant Carter quailed before this sudden and unexpected resistance; then, recovering his wonted boldness, he said:

"You'll do it, Rick; you know you will, and then I'll keep my word with you; then you shall see Cathleen, and have peace and prosperity to boot. But if you refuse me, never shall you see Cathleen, never shall you know her fate, and you shall swing for the murder at B——; I swear it."

The sudden sobriety of Rick had as suddenly yielded to his former condition, and confused by the horror of Carter's proposition, and the fear caused by the latter's determined attitude, he yielded to all the weakness of his wretched state.

"For the love of God, Morty Carter, don't ask me to do that. I'll do any other mortal thing for you. Have you a heart, man——"

Utterly overcome, he dropped his head on the table and cried like a child. Carter looked at him contemptuously for a moment, then, knowing that a sound drunken sleep would speedily succeed all this maudlin sentiment, he left the room.

CHAPTER VIII.

FATHER O'CONNOR.

"WILL he ever come?"

The words were spoken by a man who seemed to be in the agony of death, his pallid face, more ghastly pallid because of the contrast its own white hue presented to the blood stains just showing beneath a bandage about the temples, was contracted into an expression of intense pain, and his large, black eyes burned with the fire of a mortal disease. His stalwart frame shook with the throes of agony, and the poor pallet upon which he was extended trembled beneath him.

A middle-aged kindly-faced woman was endeavoring in simple, uncouth fashion to soothe him, and a man in the dress of an Irish laborer stood sorrowfully looking on. To the rear of the bed in an open doorway were grouped a half dozen sad, expectant, wondering faces, men and women of the Irish peasant class; but, impressed with the necessity of silence for the dying man, scarcely a breath escaped them.

"Will he ever come?"

The words were repeated with a sadly pathetic force, and he struggled to free one of his hands from the coverlet, and raise it to his head; it was bandaged, and before he had half succeeded in his task he had dropped it with a moan of intense pain.

"He will come, acushla," whispered the woman at his side, as she gently covered the poor helpless arm.

"Father Meagher, God bless him, never disappointed one of us yet, an' whin he hears of this case where it was a fight wid the soldiers, he'll fly like the lightnin'; but it's a good step away, an' the messenger's not so long gone."

There was a movement among the little party in the door

way; a respectful falling back to make way for some one, and Father O'Connor entered, his dusty garb and perspiring face giving evidence of somewhat long and hasty travel.

"At last," murmured the sufferer; and the woman respectfully courtesying to the priest, said:

"We were expecting Father Meagher, your riverance."

"He sent me in his place," answered the clergyman as he drew a stool to the bedside and seated himself.

The wondering faces in the doorway had disappeared, withdrawn to one of the neighbors' houses while the priest should be closeted with his penitent, and the woman and the man had also respectfully retired, but only to the outer apartment.

"You are badly hurt, my man," said the priest, kindly.

"I am, your riverence: I got my death wound; but I'd not mind it if it wasn't for the two I left in Ballycarry, my old mother and Cathleen."

For an instant his eyes were dim with tears, then, as if even in that final moment he deemed such an emotion unmanly, he stifled it by a convulsive effort, and continued:

"I'd give my heart's blood for Ireland, an' count it little. When the news of the rising in Kildare came to us I was for joining the boys at once, an' I did, though me mother strove to hinder me with her prayers an' her entreaties, an' Cathleen tried hard to keep me."

Again he paused, because of the emotion which would have unmanned him, and Father O'Connor said with firm persuasiveness:

"You must stop this, my poor fellow; you are too weak to talk in that strain."

"No, father! for the love of Heaven let me go on. My heart's burstin' with all I'm thinkin', an' it'll be a relief to spake my thoughts to you, for you'll not revale them. Cathleen came to us when she was a baby—a man named Morty Carter brought her." Father O'Connor gave a slight start. "He brought her for my mother to take care of, saying that she was an orphan niece of his, an' that he was flyin' with her

from her father's people, because they wanted the child to make her a Protestant, an' he was in mortal dread that they'd ever find her. My mother was a widow then, and I, her only child, was eight years old. The infant was to be called by our name, Kelly, an' she was to be told nothin' beyant that Carter was her uncle. Carter paid my mother for all this, an' he came regularly to see us. We were very happy, for Cathleen was the same as an own sister to me, an' whin she grew up she was more, father, for I loved her; but she wouldn't listen when I'd spake of that; her heart was set on other things—it was in the convent where she went to school, an' where she'd be willin' to stay always if it wasn't for the lonesomeness my mother'd have without her."

Again he was forced to pause from exhaustion and pain, and the priest, leaving him for a moment, went to the outer room to learn if a surgeon had been summoned.

"No, your riverence," said the man, "he begged us not to get a docthor, only the priest; an' sure it's little good the docthor could do him, anyhow."

Father O'Connor could not help mentally agreeing with the observation, but he insisted on a messenger being dispatched immediately for the nearest physician, and returning to the sufferer, he held to his lips the drink of cold water which the latter craved.

"I'm stronger, father," he said, letting his head drop back on the pillow with a sigh of relief, "the pain is easier." Then, pausing to draw a deep breath, he resumed: "It's two months now since I said good-by to my mother and Cathleen, since I joined the boys. I thought we'd do great things for Ireland, we were all so hot an' eager to be fightin'; but the other power is too strong. We can't do much only die for the old land. They beat us back to-day when we made the attack on the barracks, and if it wasn't for the captain's daring they'd have murdered me outright. But it's not that I'd talk of now. I want to ask you this, father. Will you try to find Morty Carter? The boys here think a power of him,

and trust him entirely. The other night, when word was brought to Hurley's of some search goin' to be made by the authorities, a paper was given for safe keeping to Carter; it had the names an' the places of all them that the English would be glad to seize, an' a power of information besides."

He paused to recover his gasping breath, and when he resumed, his voice was thick and hoarse. "Altogether it would have been a great document for the government to get hold of, an' somehow I didn't like the look in Carter's eyes when he took it, but maybe I was wrong."

Again he paused, and in response to the priest's whispered admonition, said, when once more he had recovered sufficient strength: "Yes, father, I will be quick now, for I have only this to say: will you tell Morty Carter all that I told you about Cathleen? he can't blame me for tellin' you, as you are a priest, and he knows that I never told mortal before, anything save that Cathleen was a cousin of my own—I never told that Carter was her uncle. We all kept the secret—the young crayture herself, an' my mother an' me. Will you do this for me, father, an' then will you ask him if he'll continue the bit of support to my poor ould mother? Cathleen will not leave her till she dies; I know she'll not."

The whole of his poor, struggling soul seemed to be in his pleading eyes as he turned them on the pitying face above him.

"Yes, my poor fellow," answered the priest, "I shall do all you ask?"

"An' one thing more—will you write to Cathleen? I'll not ask you to make the journey to see her; it would be too far for your reverence, but write to her, an' tell her how the love in my heart for her never left it, an' how, whin she's one day afore the althar, givin' her pure young heart to God foriver, she will not forget to pray for William Kelly. An' say to my mother, father, that I lave her the love of my dyin' heart."

He was utterly exhausted, and the priest looked in some dismay at the ghastly countenance, and the scarcely breathing

form; but the poor fellow rallied once more, and asked with painful eagerness:

"Will you promise that also, father?"

"Yes, all that you ask."

"Thank God!" he had freed his hands from the coverlet, and he strove to clasp them in his gratitude, but they fell helplessly on the bed.

"I can prepare to die now," he said, "there's a load off my mind."

He motioned for another drink, and then signified his desire to make his confession. On its conclusion the doctor arrived, and instantly pronounced the case hopeless. Death would ensue within the next twelve hours.

The dying man caught the half-whispered words, and he smiled.

"I am not afraid to go now," he said, "an' somehow I think it's best. Sure it was glorious to get my death striking a blow for old Ireland."

"I shall return," the priest said to the woman and her male companion, who had entered the room with the doctor; the latter having given some brief directions about the treatment of the wounded man, departed with the clergyman.

Groups of men and women were everywhere; on the road, in the doorways, and everywhere with the same melancholy and somewhat defiant expression of countenance. Gloomy determination looked from every brow, and a fierce animosity gleamed from every eye. The conversation was always in low tones, but it was accompanied at times by a bodeful shaking of the head, and a threatening gesture of the hands which evinced how deep were the feelings of the speaker. All bowed respectfully to the priest and his companion, who, as the parish doctor, was well known, and ardently liked because of his sympathy with the Irish cause and his kindness to the poor, though he was himself a Protestant, and descended from an aristocratic family.

"This is bad business," he said to Father O'Connor, when

the two had gone beyond seeing and hearing distance of the groups they had passed. The priest did not answer; he was absorbed in perplexing thought of Morty Carter. The little physician appeared not to mind the absence of a reply; following the bent of his own excited thoughts he continued:

"A country badly governed will ever be a thorn in the side of the dominant country, and there will be agitations, and risings, and blood-spilling till England either wipes us entirely from the face of the earth, or leaves us to legislate for ourselves; but she has trampled upon us until in our misery we have turned, and now she would crush us out. Yet, with all her power she could not do it; by Heaven! she could not do it, if there was not treachery among ourselves."

The vehemence of the last words startled Father O'Connor from his reverie.

"What do you mean, Doctor Day?" he asked with some surprise.

"Why, early this morning, before that attack on the barracks, I was summoned to attend Sergeant Hooper's little daughter. The child was very sick, and the father's anxiety about her was considerably aggravated by the fact that he was part of a command ordered to Dhrommacohol to make the arrest of some party on information furnished by one Carter—Morty Carter, an Irishman, I believe, who pretends to be one of the stanchest of the *Fenians*."

"Carter, did you say, Morty Carter?" eagerly asked the priest.

"Yes;" was the reply. "I saw the fellow once; a coarse, blustering, corpulent man."

"And who was the party to be arrested?"

"Some escaped Australian convict, I believe. I did not hear the name. But, father, how excited you are! does my news affect *you*?"

The priest was violently trembling, and the perspiration stood thickly upon his face. It was some moments before he could speak, and then his voice sounded husky and strange.

"There is but one Australian convict that might be found in Dhrommacohol, and that is Carroll O'Donoghue, my *brother*, I might say. His father took me, a foundling, in my babyhood, caused me to be reared in his own happy home side by side with his children, and through his love and care I am what I am. Carroll O'Donoghue was arrested before, and transported to Australia. He may have escaped; it may be he, and if so, and that his capture now should be due to Morty Carter, then is he betrayed by one who for my lifetime has been the trusted and intimate friend of the family."

He bowed his head and covered his face with his hands.

"Perhaps not; perhaps my information is wrong," said the little doctor, whose tender heart could ill bear the sight of such trouble as Father O'Connor's whole attitude expressed. "At all events, you can go immediately to Dhrommacohol and ascertain the truth."

The priest roused himself and shook his head. "I must bear the *Viaticum* back to this poor dying creature."

He started on with hurried pace, the little physician hardly able to keep by his side, till their paths diverged.

The priest, quickening his gait almost to a run, struck across the fields, and on to a by-lane that led to an exceedingly humble little church, and adjoining it a proportionately humble little dwelling. On the doorstep of the latter stood a neatly-dressed old woman; she was slightly leaning on a stick, as if she suffered from some infirmity, and her face wore the look of one who had maintained a long and anxious watch.

At first sight of the straight, athletic, clerically-robed form hurrying up the little *boreen*, she turned to some one within, and cried joyously: "He's coming at last, Jerry; see that the kettle is boiling, so that he'll have a fresh cup of tea. I'll be bound that he's had neither bite nor sup since he left Dhrommacohol this morning, and here it is well-nigh evenin'."

To her disappointment, instead of coming to the house, he entered the church.

"Always the way," she muttered; "either fastin' or prayin', or round among the poor, or hearin' confessions. It's little he thinks of himself, may God bless him! Sure it's on my knees night an' day, prayin' for him, *I* ought to be; if it wasn't for him, it's a home in the workhouse I'd have this minit; an' he might have taken many another for his housekeeper—many a strong young woman that'd be able to do his work; but he picked me out, poor an' lame as I am; may God Almighty bless him!"

She turned within to superintend Jerry's arrangement of the frugal supper, and finally bade him take her place at the door to cry out instantly that Father O'Connor should emerge from the church, in order that she might have the tea just ready for him.

Jerry, a stout, half-grown, half-witted, stuttering lad, another of Father O'Connor's *proteges*, adopted by the priest because of his forlorn and outcast condition, reluctantly did as he was told; reluctantly, because he had just missed an opportunity of pilfering some of the cream from the pitcher.

"H-h-h-he—" stuttered Jerry. The housekeeper hobbled as fast as she could for the teapot, and in her hurry overturned the steaming contents on her hand as well as into the priest's cup. "He ain't coming," stammered out Jerry at last, thrusting his head in to see what was the cause of Mrs. Daly's outcry of pain. He burst into one of his idiotic laughs as he saw the housekeeper wring her scalded hand, and witnessed her anger at her disappointment.

"What did you spake for, thin, whin he wasn't comin'?" she asked angrily.

"Y-y-you wouldn't wait t-t-to hear it all," he stuttered; "h-h-he's gone down the *boreen*—an' n-n-now you're fixed," as he saw how powerless her right hand was to grasp her stick, and that having to employ her left hand in its use, she would be unable to inflict, as she sometimes did, so painful a blow upon his shoulders. Delighted Jerry saw in the accident many an opportunity of helping himself to the cream and

the sugar in defiance of old Mother Daly's blackthorn, and he continued to laugh immoderately. The good old dame's indignation was very violent; between the smarting of her hand, which had been somewhat severely scalded, and her disappointment at the priest not coming, her anger against Jerry each moment increased.

"You ungrateful *spalpeen!*" she cried, trying to hobble to him; but it was such awkward and slow work, handling the stick with her left hand, that the lad had time to put himself into all sorts of defiant and grotesque postures before she reached him, and then to dance out of her way with screams of delight. She shook her stick at him.

"You'll pay for this, you unmannerly knave! Wait till his riverence comes back; I'll make a clane breast of the whole of yer doin's."

"He-he-he" laughed Jerry, pointing to Father O'Connor's retreating form. He was turning out of the *boreen* into the fields he had so recently crossed

CHAPTER IX.

THE DYING FENIAN.

"HURRY, your riverince! the soldiers have surrounded the house where poor Kelly is dying, and there'll be bloody work there afore long."

The speaker, so violently excited that his utterance was hardly distinct, was a stout, broad-chested Irishman of the laboring class. He carried his hat in his hand, and his red and perspiring face and dust-covered, disarranged garments attested the speed with which he had come.

Father O'Connor did not answer him, but pressing closer to his bosom the hand which was already partly within his surtout, he quickened his pace till even the swift pedestrian, who, out of respect, had fallen a little behind, could scarcely keep up with him. The report was not exaggerated; the soldiers had attempted to surround the house where the dying man lay, but they were met by such determined and desperate resistance on the part of the people that they were forced to withdraw a little and consider how best to renew their attack. Every man, woman and child in the vicinity had gathered on the spot, and now stood forming in the front of the house a solid mass of human beings,—the men, armed with motley weapons, pikes and fowling pieces prevailing, and some of the women bearing large stones.

There was a subdued murmur as the form of the priest came in sight, and the glowering looks of anger and hate which shone so fiercely in the eyes of many gave place to a calmer expression. On he came, his hand still pressing closely to his bosom the sacred treasure he carried, his lips slightly moving as if in prayer. With a hasty glance at the wall of people before

him, a longer and more searching look at the soldiers drawn up in two ranks a few yards distant, he prepared to enter the house.

The mass of beings opened, wedging themselves on each side, so that a free ingress was made for him to the front entrance, and as he passed, with one simultaneous movement, every one knelt, heads were bared, hands clasped in mute supplication, and forms bowed almost to the ground, as the sacred Host passed, borne on the bosom of a creature. The soldiers were amazed at the scene, and stood surveying it with unconcealed wonder; but their captain was quick to perceive in it an unexpected advantage. He gave the order to charge after the priest, and in a moment the redcoats were in the midst of the kneeling mass. Up with one accord as quickly as they had fallen prostrate the people, now furious, fought with savage desperation. They flung themselves against the soldiers, they grappled with them hand to hand, and so closely were the Englishmen hemmed in that, save in a few instances, they were unable to use their fire-arms. The priest had passed within the house, his retreat covered by a dozen powerful Irishmen, and ingress after him rendered vain by the barrier formed of their brawny bodies.

The dying man was gasping on his pallet; his large black eyes, now strangely luminous with the moisture of death, were turned in the direction whence the noise from the combatants without proceeded. The woman who had so kindly attended him from the beginning was on her knees by his side sobbing bitterly, and her husband was standing beside her with folded arms and a face expressive of his violent emotions. A little table near had been covered with a white cloth, and a common crucifix, together with a lighted candle, had been placed upon it in preparation for the priest's return.

"You are at peace with all," whispered the clergyman to the dying man, "you forgive those who have placed you as you are?"

"All, father; my heart holds hatred for none."

The shouts without were growing louder; the noise of the affray coming closer, as if the combatants were on the very point of entering.

"You ask pardon of God for all your sins?" again whispered the priest.

"I do, father; an' I hope for His mercy."

Father O'Connor put on his stole, and took from his breast the little receptacle which contained the Blessed Sacrament.

"*Domine non sum dignus*," his voice rung out clear and loud as he held the Sacred Host for a moment before the dying man's gaze.

"Ireland forever!" shouted a voice without, high above the din of other voices, and then, simultaneously with the report of a fire-arm, sounded a scream of agony.

The dying man had received the Sacred Particle, and a smile crossed his features for a moment, then they settled into the white rigidity of death, his fingers fell from the crucifix the priest had placed between them, and the Fenian was dead. At that instant the soldiers had succeeded in effecting an entrance, and they filed into the room, unrestrained by the quiet and awe which met them.

The man who stood beside his weeping wife turned upon them like an enraged tiger.

"He has escaped ye! ye couldn't wait to let him die in peace, but thank God he's gone where your hellish law can't reach him."

Finding their prey indeed gone, and becoming somewhat awe-stricken by the still white presence before them, their demeanor became more subdued; they turned to leave the house and to join their companions who were without, guarding their captives. But the infuriated people, beaten though they were, would make another effort to rescue their comrades; they fell upon the soldiers, men and women of them, grappling, striking, tearing till the melee threatened to be a desperately bloody one.

Father O'Connor, seeing that the little handful of the Irish

could avail nothing against the superior number and skill of the English, flung himself into the midst of the contestants.

"Listen to me!" he said, regardless of the blows which rained around him, and making his voice sound piercingly clear above the din; "desist, my people, in God's name; shed no more blood this day."

They were accustomed to yield obedience to that voice, and there was something in its accents now more forcible, more commanding than it had been ever before; there was also something in that form, standing so fearlessly in the midst of the affray, that compelled them to hearken to his words. The fight ceased, and the soldiers, many of them bearing on their own bloody persons painful evidence of the prowess of the Irish, departed, taking with them as prisoners those who had been foremost in the struggle. Some of the women followed, wailing for their husbands, or fathers, or brothers, and Father O'Connor had enough work for the next three hours in attending to the injured—fortunately none were mortally hurt—and comforting the families of those who had been arrested. It was very late when at last he could turn his face to Dhrommacohol, and without going back to his own home, where his devoted old housekeeper maintained a constant and anxious watch, he struck into the nearest road which would lead him to Father Meagher's.

The storm that had so drenched Rick of the Hills was in its wildest fury, and the priest, used as he was to all the hardships of severe weather, often shivered as the rain and the blast seemed to pierce him through; the fatigue of the day and his long fast were somewhat overcoming him, and it was with a thankful heart that he caught the first glimmer of the light which he knew shone in Father Meagher's little study. There was another light in one of the upper windows, but he did not dream that it came from a room in which Nora McCarthy was then kneeling before her crucifix; she had exhausted her tears, and now she could not even pray; she could only look and try to nerve herself to courage and en-

durance by the contemplation of the image upon the cross. Clare had thrown herself sobbing upon the bed, and had fallen at last into a troubled, moaning slumber.

Father Meagher, absorbed in sad and anxious thought, his face buried in his hands, was aroused by the gentle knock at the door; deeming it a sick call, or perhaps Tighe a Vohr, who he knew would return as soon as possible with news of the prisoner, he hurriedly obeyed the summons, starting when he saw Father O'Connor.

"What, Charlie, my boy! back again? what is the matter? but you are drenched!" observing the dripping garments of the young priest.

With the tenderness of a mother, the old clergyman bustled about to find dry garments for his visitor, and then he departed to the kitchen, intending to prepare with his own hands some warm refreshment.

The sound of sobbing startled him; he held the little lamp above his head and peered into the corners. It was Moira, almost prone to the floor, and so doubled up as to hardly bear semblance to a human form. She was in such a paroxysm of grief that she neither heard nor perceived her uncle. He called her somewhat sternly; she started, and rose hastily, her sobbing ceased, and her apron brought into violent requisition for the purpose of drying her eyes.

"I—can't—help it," spoken in most woe-begone accents from the depths of her apron; "Mr. O'Donoghue will be hung, and there will be dreadful times—o-o-oh," prolonged almost into a wail.

Father Meagher put the lamp down on the kitchen table, and stood looking at his niece with a mingled expression of displeasure and wonder. She, surprised at his silence, glanced up furtively.

"Look at me," he resumed.

The sternness of his tone commanded obedience, and she dropped her apron and stood before him, with a most ludicrously abashed air.

"You are trying to deceive me, Moira Moynahan; it's not for Mr. O'Donoghue's fate you are crying; it is for Tighe a Vohr."

Moira blushed violently, hung her head still lower, and rolled her apron over her thumbs.

"I have but one word to say about that, Moira, and that is that I absolutely forbid you to receive any attentions from him."

"Oh, uncle! hasn't he proved himself noble, and good, and true—didn't he manage Mr. O'Donoghue's escape? and he loves me;" the last was spoken with a pretty, faltering, deprecating air.

"Indeed! has he told you so?"

"Yes, uncle; to-night he told me how long he'd been loving me, and I couldn't help telling him how long I'd been loving him."

"And how long, pray, may that be?" asked the half-amused and yet indignant clergyman. Moira answered without venturing to look at him:

"Since the time he saved me from Squire Turner's dog."

"And that was shortly after you came to live with me—shortly after I promised your poor mother on her deathbed to be a true father to you. And how old were you then?"

"Turned of thirteen;" spoken in a very low voice.

"And what is your age now?" there was a touch of sarcasm in the tone that made Moira feel very uncomfortable.

"I shall be seventeen the fifth day of next June," she answered, in a bolder voice, as if she were regaining confidence.

"Ah!" the priest drew a long breath, "so in just eleven months and twenty-seven days you will be seventeen. Quite a mature age. And what, may I ask, were the plans of this ardent lover of yours?"

Her faltering, deprecating air was again assumed.

"If Mr. O'Donoghue could be got away safely to America, Tighe intended to ask your consent to our marriage, and—and——"

The priest would listen to no more; sternness and decision took the place of whatever amusement he might have felt.

"Moira Moynahan, remember that I command you to discountenance every attention of Tighe a Vohr. He has proved himself noble and devoted in the matter of his master's interests, but he is not the husband for you. His drinking habits alone would make you miserable——"

"But, uncle," interrupted the girl eagerly, "he has been keeping sober all the while he was away, and he promises to continue so."

"Don't talk to me like that," answered the priest, peremptorily. "How many times within the past three years has he taken the pledge from me and broken it? No, I repeat that you are to discountenance his attentions under pain of my displeasure."

Father O'Connor, who had donned dry garments, and was anxious to confer with Father Meagher, became a little weary of waiting; he called from the passage-way to the old clergyman. The call startled the latter into remembering the errand upon which he had sought the kitchen, and from which he had been diverted by the grief of his niece. He looked at the extinguished fire, then at the open cupboard filled with clean, but empty dishes, and lastly at Moira, who from being arch and pretty had become pouting and sullen. She saw his look and divined its meaning, having recognized the voice that sounded from the passage, but she was too full of her own wilful pettishness to pretend to understand it. The tender-hearted old priest, already repenting that he had spoken so harshly to her, orphan that she was, and after all not much more than a child, attempted to make amends by bidding her kindly to bed. Then he answered Father O'Connor, playfully commending him to further patience, and he immediately began to bustle about preparations for making tea. Moira watched him, enjoying with unkind triumph all the blunders his awkwardness and inexperience caused him to

make. In vain he tried to kindle the fire; three times the blaze ascended the chimney, but three times it died out in utter blackness; his fingers were burned, his face covered with perspiration, and all hope of any success fast dying within him. The third and last time when the sportive flame went out as if in very contempt of the unskilled hands which had kindled it, the patient old clergyman gave a long, plaintive sigh, and turned and looked at Moira with so woe-begone an expression that the girl could control her mirth no longer; she laughed outright; but then, also, she had been touched by his patience, and by kindly, grateful thoughts of him which struggled with her feelings of disappointment and anger.

"Go," she said, when her laughter had subsided, "go to Father O'Connor, and I will attend to this."

The clergyman was immensely relieved; his long-drawn breath attested it, his beaming smile on Moira, and his meek, gentle "Thank you" bore witness to it.

Father O'Connor listened sadly to the account of Carroll O'Donoghue's recapture; then he communicated the information which he had received from Dr. Day relative to Morty Carter. It gave Father Meagher a painful shock; compelled as he was to believe that Carter was a villain, he was unprepared to hear that he had gone to the infamous length of betraying his own ward.

"How much does Carroll know of his treachery?" asked the young priest.

"Absolutely nothing," was the answer. "The first intimation of it that even Tighe a Vohr had was from his mother, who had but just learned of Carter's cruel conduct to Clare and Nora. It staggered the poor faithful fellow, his mother says, but he must have repeated nothing of it to Carroll, for the lad did not appear to know it when he was with us; he seemed to think that Nora's and Clare's presence in my house was due to the fact that we all wanted to be together when he came, and I confess I was loth to undeceive him. He had so much to think about, and so much to fear, that I could

not burden him with this fellow's villainy : besides I thought there would be time enough to tell him."

"Yes ; but he trusts this Carter, trusts him, and even loves him ; at least he did before his transportation—trusted him implicitly, and had unbounded affection for him."

"I know it," responded Father Meagher; "but Tighe a Vohr is aware now of Carter's true character, and the faithful fellow will leave no stone unturned to foil his villainy ; he will not fail to put his young master on his guard."

Moira entered with the tea, steaming and neatly arranged as her deft little hands knew well how to arrange it. Her uncle gave her a look of beaming gratitude, and stately Father O'Connor noticed her with a kindly salute ; but it was her *role* to play the deeply-injured maiden, and with a sad face and frequent melancholy sighs, she responded to the greeting of the young priest, placed the tray before him, and slowly and pensively left the room. She had fancied that Father Charlie, as she was wont to call the young clergyman, would notice her sad manner, inquire the cause of her uncle, and perhaps induce the latter to relent a little from his stern, and as she deemed it, cruel determination ; but both priests were too much absorbed in weightier matters, the one either to inquire, or the other to volunteer information pertaining to Moira.

CHAPTER X

SHAUN.

CARROLL O'DONOGHUE, guarded by a mounted force, was hurried on to prison, and the news of his arrest telegraphed to Dublin Castle; Tighe a Vohr faithfully followed him; badgered by the soldiers, threatened by the police, and almost ridden down by the mounted guards, he still kept in the wake of his master—assuming the part of a good-natured simpleton, but keeping every sense on the alert for the benefit of the prisoner. Thus far his wit and vigilance were of little avail; the prison was reached and its heavy doors opened and closed on Carroll, and Tighe was left without, with, as he himself expressed it, "a heavy heart in his buzzum." He stood scratching his head and looking up at the grim stone walls with an expression assumed for the occasion: one of ludicrous amazement and fear. Suddenly there was the bound of a dog round the corner of the jail, a succession of quick, sharp, yelping barks, and a lean, scraggy, tawny animal had jumped on Tighe's breast, and was making frantic efforts to pass his tongue over the whole of Tighe's face at once.

"May I never be shot in a juel, but it's Shaun!" Tighe's arms were round the dog, squeezing him in the most human-like of embraces, and Tighe himself was crying like a child.

"Shaun, me beautiful Shaun! Sure it bates all iver I heerd. How did you make me out at all, at all? an' it's good luck sent you. You cheered me afore when I was down-hearted, an' you've kem again to do the same thing."

The boisterousness of the dog, and Tighe's own tearfully-delivered apostrophes, attracted the attention of the soldiers

who were lounging about, and they drew near to witness the scene, many a guffaw sounding as they beheld Tighe's ludricrously extravagant welcome of the animal. But in a moment an officer in full uniform appeared among them.

"Here fellow," he said roughly, "what are you doing with that dog? He belongs to me."

Tighe came forward carrying his burden. "If you plaze, yer honor, would you mind tellin' me how you kem by him? I was his former masther; sure he'll tell to that by the thricks I'll put him through. Down, Shaun, an' show how a gintleman coorts his lady love."

The dog jumped from Tighe's arms, looked round at the laughing soldiers for a moment, as if making his selection, then with a sudden spring he bounded to the neck of an unsuspecting fellow near, and passing his tongue rapidly over his face, sprung back to Tighe's arms.

Every one laughed loudly and applauded, even the officer who had claimed the dog.

"Now, Shaun, pick out the biggest rogue in the company—mind you, I said *rogue*."

Shaun was on his feet again, going to every one in turn, and looking into the face of each with a most comical gravity; finally he stopped before Tighe himself, and announced his selection by a loud bark.

Every one laughed loudly again, this time with louder and more prolonged mirth. Tighe affected to be displeased, and swore that the dog's judgment was wrong, much to the increased amusement of the spectators, now swelled to a large crowd.

"He has another thrick yet, gintlemen. Now, Shaun!" Shaun immediately put himself into his attitude of attention, which was sitting upon his hind legs, and letting his fore paws drop, something in the style of a mincing miss of the present day.

"Now, Shaun; do you mind what I say?" Shaun nodded his head as much as to say that he understood his master.

"Well, go around now, and pick out the gintleman of the company—the true gintleman, that wouldn't do a mane act for love nor money."

The dog arose and began to make his circuit; but he did it slowly, as if it was a very grave task, squatting before each person, and looking into each one's face with an air that sent everybody into screams of laughter. At length he jumped upon the officer himself, announcing as before his selection by a bark.

"Upon my honor, but your dog is marvelously trained," said that gentleman, as soon as he had recovered from his surprise; and Shaun was by Tighe's side again, wagging his tail, and looking up into Tighe's face with an expression that seemed to say:

"Haven't I done well?"

"I have no wish to deprive you unfairly of the dog," continued the officer. "He was found prowling around here a day or two ago, and he showed such pluck in defending himself against a cur twice his size that I took quite a fancy to him."

"Oh, that's Shaun all over," interrupted Tighe. The officer, not minding the interruption, continued: "There was no owner for him, so I became his master, and now, if you will name your price, I will buy him."

"Is it sell Shaun!" said Tighe. "Oh, yer honor, don't ax to part us! I'll bring him ivery day to see yer honor, an' I'll put him through his thricks for your divarsion, but lave us together."

There was so much pathos mingled with the comical entreaty that the Englishman, somewhat inclined to good nature, and rather fancying Tighe for his simplicity, said hastily:

"Well, keep him, my good fellow."

"Oh, but Shaun was right when he pinted you out as the thrue gintleman," burst out Tighe; "sure I'll never forget it for you, an' Shaun'll mind it too. An' now, will yer honor

give me lave to come an' see you at the barracks? I've a fancy intirely for the redcoats, but not one of them'll take kindly to me. I've spent this blessed mornin' tryin' to get a glimpse of the jail yard an' to offer my sarvices to some of the soldiers, but it wasn't one bit of use. But mebbe I'd be able to sarve yer honor sometime."

The Englishman was very much amused; his fancy was picturing how his friends at home would regard this specimen of an Irish valet, should he decide to employ Tighe in that capacity. The drollery of the thing, as well as the fact that his own valet was anxious to return to England, incited him to proffer the situation to Tighe. He passed his hand over his face, as if in perplexed thought, and looked again at Tighe a Vohr. Certainly, a more grotesque or laughable figure never before met his view; the long, flapping coat loosely confined at the waist by several twists of straw, the dingy red waistcoat turned back to show the bosom of a homespun shirt, the bright, blue handkerchief tied in loose sailor fashion around his neck, and the whole surmounted by a hat pressed from hard usage into an odd shape, and looped at the side by a dingy bow that made it all strangely ridiculous, completed a figure that could provoke nothing but merriment.

The officer laughed loudly; the conceit of engaging Tighe and retaining him to show to his friends at home gained upon him, and as he pictured the surprise and amazement of his family—his elegant brothers, and dainty, fastidious sisters—he was almost convulsed with mirth.

"Come this afternoon to the barracks, and inquire for Captain Crawford; that will be passport sufficient for the present," he said, as soon as his laughter had subsided; and turning on his heel, he walked rapidly down the street, leaving Tighe to be besieged by roguish inquiries, and bantered by numerous jests. But Tighe a Vohr was a match for all; he assumed the *omadhaun*, and what with his own apparent simplicity, and the tricks of Shaun, he succeeded in convincing the soldiers about him that he was really a poor innocent, who was capable alone of making fun.

The roll-call sounded, and the crowd which surrounded Tighe dispersed. Whistling to Shaun, who had ventured on a little expedition of his own down the street, Tighe also departed in search of forage for himself and his dog. It was still three good hours until the time assigned for his visit to Captain Crawford, and he bent his way to the outskirts of the town. Well knowing that what hospitality might be denied to himself the tricks of Shaun would be sure to win, he had little hesitation in applying for a meal at any of the houses of the gentry that he passed; he was confident, also, of the influence of his own roguish flattery upon the servants; and he was not mistaken. At the very first house to which he applied the best in the servants' larder was placed before him, and, as Tighe expressed it, "a male fit for a prince was laid afore Shaun." Both did full justice to the viands, and both expressed their thanks, Tighe by one of his peculiar speeches, and Shaun by antics that convulsed everybody with laughter. Out on the road again, and Tighe penetrated still deeper into the rural surroundings; choosing a lane which seemed little frequented, and on which no house bordered for some distance, he sat down on a bowlder and whistled to Shaun, who had plunged with frantic delight into the green depths beyond. The dog immediately bounded to his master's side.

"Faith, Shaun, it's a supernatural animile you are intirely! how did you know enough to make me out in the nick of time as you did? sure if it wasn't for you I'd never be able to get a sight of the masther, at all, at all; but now, begorra, the way looks aisy, only we'll have to be careful."

Shaun looked very earnestly into his master's face, as if to corroborate the assertion.

"I'm bothered about one thing," pursued Tighe, talking with all gravity to the dog, "an' that's Morty Carther. I didn't tell the masther what me mother tould me about him, bekaise it would unman him complately; but while I was followin' him to prison I heerd a couple of soldiers talkin' about this same Carther, an' it opened me eyes. He's a

thraithor an' a villain, Shaun, but, by the powers, we'll circumvint him yet." Tighe brought his fist down to his knee by way of emphasis to his words, and Shaun barked, not to be behind his master in force and earnestness. "We'll be wary, Shaun, an' we'll watch this same Carther," resumed Tighe; then, having spent some time in silent thought, he judged by the sun that it was time for his promised visit, and returned briskly to the town.

"Captain Crawford is not in now, and he will not be in for an hour," was the response to Tighe's inquiry at the barrack gate.

"He tould me to come at this perticler time," said Tighe, humbly, "an' I'd like to show him I was punctool; mebbe yer honor'd let me wait for him."

"Oh, you are the fellow with the dog," said the man on guard, catching sight of Shaun, who had remained behind to gratify his canine curiosity. "I have heard nothing since the morning but the wonderful tricks of that ugly animal of yours; yes, you can go in there and wait," pointing to the open door of a long, low room against the sides of which sundry benches were arranged; and turning away to resume his sentry walk, he muttered:

"What with pretty women that floor you with a look if you dare to wink at them, and cunning Irishmen that get the best of you at every turn, and wonderful dogs that puzzle you with their tricks, this same Ireland is a queer place, and I wish I was out of it."

Tighe quietly seated himself on one of the benches, and Shaun went on an inquiring journey around the room. A stout, burly soldier occupied another of the benches, a little removed from Tighe; he was engaged in writing, a sheet of paper half filled lying on a large book on his crossed knees, and a huge inkhorn by his side. It was evidently a difficult task, for the pen was often idly poised between his fingers, and his face wore the puzzled, blank expression of one who did not even comprehend his task.

"Hang it!" he said at last, forgetting, in his perplexity, that he had a listener; "I wish the Widow Moore was at the bottom of the sea before I came across her."

Tighe a Vohr, keenly on the alert, pricked up his ears; a bright idea shot suddenly into his mind; rising slowly from his seat, he ambled up to the scribe.

"I beg pardon, yer honor, but I heerd you mintion a name that's dear to meself—an' you mintioned it in a way that went to my heart. Plaze, sir, say that you didn't mane what you said."

The Englishman looked up at the intruder in blank astonishment; then his first impulse was to laugh at the comical figure before him, his next to kick Tighe for his impudence.

"Who are you, fellow?" he asked, angrily, "and what do you know of the lady I mentioned?"

"I am only poor Tighe a Vohr," was the meek reply, "but I know a good deal of the Widdy Moore; she's the talk of the county for her beauty and goodness, and she has scores of lovers all cracking each other's heads about her."

"The devil she has!" interrupted the soldier fiercely. His exclamation and look gave sharp-witted Tighe another important clew.

"She has that, an' more by the same token it's a snug little fortune she'll bring to the man that gets her. Oh, but it's lashins of love letthers she recaves every day of her life."

The soldier's eyes instantly fell, as Tighe expected they would do, on his own half-written page. Tighe was exultant—he was *sure* now, of all that he had only guessed before.

"Sure it's many a one *I* had the opportunity of seein' an' carryin' to her, an' sometimes the lovers'd thrust me so far as to ax me to compose the letthers for them."

"*You* compose a letter!" ejaculated the soldier, his eyes almost starting from their sockets with amazement.

"Plaze, yer honor, it's in Irish I'd do it—I have the power of composin' nately in Irish—an' then I'd read it to them, an' they'd write it down in their own language. You see—"

drawing nearer to the still amazed soldier—"the Widdy Moore is an Irish woman all out, an' the Irish women are very quare; it won't do at all to trate them as ye would, beggin' yer honor's pardon, yer own countrywomen; you have to approach them as you would a sly mare, an' then you've to be careful, for the divil a hap'orth they mind givin' you the slip, and cantherin' off jist when you're surest of them. Now there was Sargeant—it wouldn't be honorable to mintion his name—he used to write the natest letthers to her at all; such beautiful English, you'd think it was honey flowin' from the lips, jist to pronounce the words; not one bit of use was it. Didn't the girrel that used to attind her at that time tell me how she'd throw the letthers down, an' say there was no divarsion in them, an' that they tired her to read them! Well, I saw how down-hearted the poor fellow was gettin', an' I axed his lave to let me compose him one. He did—arrah it was not long till he got an encouragin' answer, an' only his father tuk him home on sick lave, I think it would have been a match."

"Umph!" ejaculated the soldier, glancing ruefully at his own composition.

"It's sich a delicate matther," pursued Tighe, "that you can't be too careful."

"Upon my honor, but you seem to know a good deal about it," said the soldier.

"I do, be rayson of the matches I've helped to make all over the counthry. But I'm thinkin' it's poor success you'll have wid the widdy anyway."

"Why?" and the questioner straightened himself.

"You're too slow, an' you're too cautious; you haven't the spunk that an Irish woman likes. I'll ingage, now, that it's some milk-an'-wathery stuff you have written there, instead of the dashin' things that a woman wants. Oh, I wish yer honor luck wid your coortin', but I'm afeered you'll not have it;" and Tighe turned away as if he were too disgusted to say more.

"Stay, my good fellow," said the thoroughly nonplussed soldier: Tighe with apparent reluctance turned back.

"I don't know what to make of you," the soldier continued; "you certainly have divined my feelings toward this charming Mistress Moore,—I can think of little else since I met her—and perhaps, odd as it all seems, you may be right about the letters. Here is some paper," slipping a sheet from beneath his own half-written page, "compose one of *your* letters for me."

He vacated his seat that Tighe might take it.

"Aisy a moment," said Tighe, who wanted time to remember fully a letter he had heard read frequently in Mrs. Leary's public house, and cited as a model of elegant style for love letters: "I must consult Shaun."

To the soldier's new astonishment, Tighe whistled to the dog, who, having completed his leisurely survey of the room, had settled himself on one of the benches for a nap. Shaun as usual came bounding to his master's side.

"Now, Shaun!" Tighe held up his finger warningly, and the dog immediately assumed its comical attitude of resting on its hind legs and letting its fore paws drop forward. "We're asked to compose a letther," pursued Tighe, "an' we must think about it—do you mind what I'm sayin' now?"

The dog nodded his head as he had been trained to do at that special interrogation, and an oath, expressive of his wonder, escaped the Englishman. Tighe began to walk the room very slowly, and Shaun walked beside him, every little while looking into his master's face, as if to say that he had an idea.

"The devil! such a country as this, where the very dogs are asked to compose the letters," said the Englishman, too mystified to laugh even at the absurdity of the affair.

"It's all right now," said Tighe, returning, and taking possession of the seat vacated for him. "But I'll have to hear Shaun first."

He bent and gave a signal to the dog, who had paused when his master seated himself, and now stood looking eagerly into his face. Immediately the animal began a succession of short, sharp barks, which Tighe variously interpreted as:

"To be shure—jist what I thought—the very thing—it'll do nicely."

The Englishman's stare of horrified astonishment at the whole grotesque performance was so ludicrous that Tighe, intuitively feeling such to be the case, would not trust himself to look, but bidding Shaun cease, he immediately commenced to write.

It was a study for a sleight of hand man to watch Tighe's hold of the pen; it might have been a crowbar for the strength and desperation with which he seized it, and imagining that much depended on the skill with which he might appear to use it, he lifted it so high from the paper, and made such extraordinary flourishes in the air, that the poor befooled Englishman began to think he was in company with a madman. Tighe had gone sufficiently far in a course of education to be able to make pot-hooks and hangers, and with these crossed and blended in strange confusion, he filled the paper.

"It's the Irish way of writin'," he explained to the soldier, as the latter attempted to scrutinize the hieroglyphics over Tighe's shoulder; "an' now listen to the contints."

"'Darlin' Misthress Moore:'

"Nothin' less than darlin'd do," explained Tighe, "because nothin' else'd be strong enough."

"'You've been the light of me eyes since I met you, an' the pulse of me heart. Widout any animadvarsion I may say that in all the carcumlocutions of poethry an' logic there's nothin' so superiminently parfect to be found on the face of the globe as the young an' charmin' Widdy Moore.'

"Do you mind that word superiminently! Sure if she has a heart of stone she'll be melted at such a word as that."

And Tighe, having glanced for a moment away from the epistle to make that forcible remark, immediately resumed the pretended translation of his Irish love-letter.

'The bamin' light o' the sun grows dim whin you're not in its prisence, an' the tinder pulsations o' me own palpitatin' heart no longer go on whin your smile isn't afore me. Like a rose that kisses the mornin' dew, an' a bee that sips

from the fairest flower, consider me, darlin', charmin' Mistress Moore,

Your own undivided an' undividable lover.' "

"There, yer honor! May I niver if that doesn't win her. Let me take it whin you have it wrote, an' I'll bring you back a divartin' answer."

Still too mystified and too dull to know that he was being made the object of as keen a piece of sport as even Tighe a Vohr had ever perpetrated, the soldier, like one in a dream, took the pen, and on a clean sheet of paper began to write at Tighe's dictation, word for word of what had been read to him.

"An' what name are you puttin'?" asked Tighe, as the soldier was finishing his signature.

"William Garfield, quartermaster in her Majesty's —— Regiment," was the response.

Sealed and superscribed, the letter was given into Tighe's delighted possession.

"I'll have an answer for you this very night," he said, putting the missive carefully into his bosom.

"Captain Crawford is in now," spoke an orderly from the doorway. "Here, you fool that wanted to see him, come this way."

"That must be the name they give you in your own country, or you wouldn't be so ready to turn it over to your betthers whin you come here," said Tighe slyly, as, with Shaun at his heels, he prepared to obey the insolently-spoken request.

The orderly gave an impudent stare at the speaker, but feeling that he was an unequal match for the Irishman, he did not answer, and the way to the officers' quarters was traversed in silence.

Captain Crawford was in unusually good humor; tidings had been received of the failure of the Fenian plot to take possession of Chester Castle in England, and the shrewd officer, with keener judgment than was evinced by some who

were above him in command, foretold in his own mind the paralysis which that failure would give to the movement in Ireland. He received Tighe with unaffected condescension.

"Well, my man, have you ever served in the capacity of *valet* before?"

"In the *cap of what*?" repeated Tighe a Vohr. "I oftin heerd mintion of a valley, knowin' that what was meant by it was land or the like; but that a man could make a valley of himself passes me comprehinsion intoirely."

"I don't mean that," said Captain Crawford, laughing; "I mean what kind of a servant can you make for a gentleman."

"Oh, that's it," Tighe said slowly; then he paused a moment as if in deep thought; after which he began so voluble and ludicrous an enumeration of duties that it almost took the officer's breath, in his effort to bid the speaker cease, and to stop his own immoderate laughter.

"I see you'll do," he said; "at least I'll try you, and there will be some one to show you if you should not know what to do."

"The laste bit of showin' in the world, yer honor, 'll be enough. I was always considered smart, an' never fear but I'll sarve you faithfully, both meself an' Shaun."

Shaun was gravely listening, as if with his superior canine instinct he quite understood the bargain which was being made for him. "But I'll have to ask one privilege," continued Tighe.

"And what is that?" said the amused officer.

"To run down to Dhrommacohol once in a while to see my ould mother."

"Very well, Tighe; I believe you told me that was your name. I willingly grant the favor, only don't make your visits at inconvenient times, nor remain long when you go; and now, Ridge, there," nodding at a tall, ungainly-looking man who had been an amused listener during the interview, "will put you in trim; for certainly your present appearance"—speaking with a laugh—"hardly befits a gentleman's servant."

Ridge had more difficult work to put Tighe in trim than his master had anticipated. The suit, having belonged to a former valet who was an exceedingly small and slender man, lacked the size necessary to encase Tighe's proportions; and it was so unlike Tighe a Vohr's own style of dress that it was with many a grunt and grimace of displeasure that he at length consented to put them on.

"Not a soul'll ever know me," he said ruefully, as he surveyed himself in the glass with so ludicrous an expression of regret that his companion laughed immoderately, saying when he recovered his voice:

"You are the rummest one."

He proceeded to brush Tighe down, and to give what were in his own opinion little artistic touches to various parts of Tighe's dress, attempting at the last to surmount the new valet's curly head by a hat which had been worn so little that it retained all its first gloss.

Tighe stoutly resisted. "The divil a hair of that will go on my head, anyway. I've been takin' your ondacent thratement long enough, an' now I'll lade matthers meself. Do you see that?"—thrusting under the man's very nose his own old battered *caubeen*—"well, I'll wear that, plaze goodness, an' no other, till I go back to the *colleen* who placed that there." He pointed to the knot of faded ribbon at the side.

Argument and badgering were of little use; Tighe carried the day, and presented his respects to his new master with his comical head covering under his arm.

CHAPTER XI.

CARTER'S TOOL.

RICK OF THE HILLS had fallen speedily into the maudlin slumber which Carter had mentally predicted, and though the sun was high in the heavens, shining all the warmer and the brighter after the storm of the previous night, and people in the neighborhood had been long astir, Rick, stretched upon the floor, still heavily slept. Carter looked in at him a couple of times, but did not disturb him, and now, as he sat solitary over the rasher of bacon and cup of tea he had himself prepared, he was deeply ruminating; sometimes speaking his thoughts aloud, and again so absorbed in silent reflection as to forget the meal before him.

"I'll forward the paper this very day, and once that it is in possession of the party at the castle, it will not be long till I am rid entirely of Carroll O'Donoghue."

There was a loud knock at the front entrance. Hastily putting out of sight the remains of his meal, he hurried to the room in which Rick still heavily slept; convincing himself by a look that the slumber was profound, he withdrew, locking the door, and then he cautiously repaired to ascertain the identity of his visitor. It was Father O'Connor, and Carter was all obsequiousness, flinging the door wide open, and making his most cringing bow while the priest entered. With profuse apology for the disorder of his bachelor's home, he led the way to the room which was still redolent of his late breakfast.

Father O'Connor gravely seated himself; Carter, not a little apprehensive of what might be the import of this most unusual visit, remained standing in anxious expectation.

"I was somewhat doubtful of finding you at home," began the priest quietly.

"A little later, your reverence, and you wouldn't have found me; I have business that will take me to Tralee today."

"Very suspicious business, that of yours, Carter," said the clergyman, unable longer, with his stern sense of right, and his contempt for double-dealing, to beat about the bush; "business that has made you betray your ward, Carroll O'Donoghue, to the English government."

Carter jumped in well-feigned astonishment; indeed, his seeming wonder was not all assumed, for he was amazed to learn that his villainy had been so speedily discovered. "May I never, your reverence, if that isn't the most infamous falsehood that was ever told of mortal! who has dared to calumniate me in that manner—" affecting to swell with rage. "I ask only to meet the man who uttered that lie!" and he began to stride about the room as if he would find in that exercise some vent for his passion.

"Oh, be quiet!" said the priest, in a tone of contempt; "the proof of your treachery is too well assured to be denied by any assumed bravado on your part. It was through your instrumentality that Carroll O'Donoghue was recaptured last night."

"Carroll O'Donoghue recaptured!" Carter repeated, readily assuming a grief so real in its appearance that even the convictions of the priest were staggered for the moment. "Oh, your reverence, believe me when I say that the lad has not a truer friend than I am," pursued Carter, kneeling before the clergyman; "and all my dealings with the military, and my visits to the garrison that have caused the people to slander me so, have only been that I might give help to the boys in their difficulties. I swear to you——"

"Hush!" interrupted the priest sternly, "keep your oaths for another time and place."

With a keen look into Carter's eyes, he continued: "Where

is the paper that was given you in Hurley's for safe keeping the other night?"

Carter involuntarily started, but he answered quickly, returning with a bold glance the priest's piercing look:

"Destroyed—I burned it, for I was afraid to keep it."

Father O'Connor did not speak for a moment; he continued to survey the still kneeling form with a look in which disgust mingled with sternness; then he said slowly:

"God alone knows whether you are telling the truth."

Carter made no reply; the priest resumed: "I have another matter to speak to you about—this niece of yours, whom you have been hiding all her life from her father's people; how is it that we, your friends, have never heard of her?"

Carter jumped to his feet, repressing with difficulty the oath which rose to his lips.

"That is my secret," he said, doggedly, "and I shall not be made to tell it to any one."

Father O'Connor also arose.

"Morty Carter," he said slowly and sadly, "I have no desire to learn your secrets; my concern is to do my duty by warning you of the evil of your course. God alone sees your heart, and if you have deceived me His judgment will overtake you. Should there be aught wrong in this affair of Cathleen Kelly, the name by which you directed the child to be called, you will one day have to answer for it."

Carter's face slightly fell, despite his efforts to the contrary, and his eyes dropped for a moment before the priest's steady and piercing look.

"I have not come to you in anger," continued the speaker, "I have only come in warning. I do not forget"—his voice took a kindlier tone—"that my infancy owes you somewhat: your care for me on the death of my parents, and your subsequent provision of a home with the O'Donoghues for me, claim and possess my gratitude; it is with that feeling now that I beg you, Morty, to pause before you steep your soul

farther in guilt. If it be in your power, undo what evil you may have already done, and henceforward be true to God, and to yourself."

"I have done nothing," was the sullen reply, "and I cannot understand your seeking me here to brand me with an infamy in which I have no part."

He drew himself up with an excellent assumption of righteous indignation. The priest sighed, and said with an air of pain:

"Well, Morty, you are determined, I see, to persist in the course you have chosen; on your own head be the awful consequences—and awful will be the consequences of such villainy as yours; but, waiving that subject now, I have a message to give you from William Kelly. He was mortally wounded in an attack on the barracks, and with his dying lips he told me the story of your confiding to his mother's charge this girl, Cathleen, and he begged me to ask you to continue the monthly sum you have paid for her care. Will you do so?"

"I will," answered Carter, his face brightening; "while Cathleen stays with Mrs. Kelly I'll continue the payment."

"That is all," said Father O'Connor, turning to the door. Carter followed him.

"Your reverence," he said, with an exceedingly meek and injured air, "I am greatly distressed. Do you believe me to be guilty of all the base things that are reported of me?"

"I am sorry to say, Morty, that I do. The look in your eye reveals your guilt. May God give you grace to repent! good-by."

Without even proffering his hand, he descended the old-fashioned stair, and passed out through the front entrance so rapidly that Carter hardly realized his departure for a second or two. Then he muttered:

"So I'm being discovered on all sides, and ten to one but they've turned Carroll against me. Well, it makes little difference now; my plans are pretty well laid, and by all that's

mighty, I'll see every one of them that's against me crushed yet, and I'll live long enough to behold dainty Nora McCarthy suing for mercy at my feet."

He turned into the room and went to a corner which was occupied by a stout trunk. Opening the trunk with a peculiar key which he took from his waistcoat pocket, there were exposed sundry discolored and half-torn newspapers, together with packets of yellow letters tied with bits of dirty tape. Carter plunged his hand amid the mass and drew up a little round tin box. It was securely locked, but a tiny key attached by a slender chain to the key he had already employed opened it, and there was exposed an evenly-folded paper. This he opened and spread upon his knee. There, indeed, was all the evidence required for the arrest and even capital punishment of Fenian leaders—full plans of the organization of the I. R. B.;* entire names of the officers; details of future movements. Carter's eyes sparkled.

"They didn't discover my treachery in time; and Father O'Connor thought I'd be *omadhaun* enough to hand over this paper to him—oh, no! delivery of it to another quarter will bring many a pound into my purse. It was a fortunate stroke on my part to get this document just before I gave information of the boys' intended attack on the barracks; and they thought I'd keep it safely—so I will; I'll keep it safe for my own interest's sake. I haven't lived to this time of day, plotting and planning, not to know when a wonderful piece of luck like this falls in my way. With Carroll O'Donoghue hung, as he *shall* be, a large reward mine, as it will be for this information, and Nora McCarthy my wife, which she *must* be, the divil a hare I care for the rest of matters. To be sure, I'd like if something would take Rick out of the way after he has served my purpose, and may be I can manage that also. He knows too much of the past; and what with his mad love for *Cathleen*, and his devilish scruples about doing dirty work, as he calls it, he is getting to be dangerous."

* Irish Republican Brotherhood.

He paused a moment as if surprised by some sudden thought; then he resumed his soliloquy:

"I wonder, now, if this prying poke of a priest would take it into his head to go and see the Widow Kelly, and Cathleen! well, if he should, he'll learn nothing more than he already knows, for they are as much in the dark about my doings as I want them to be."

He began to fold the open paper still on his knee, continuing:

"They will probably hurry Carroll on to prison; well, I shall see him, anyway, and sound him; if they have not told him about my proposal to Miss McCarthy, why he used to have such an affection for me, and to trust me so implicitly, that I think I can make it appear to him how I have been wronged and slandered."

He put the packet he had made of the paper carefully into his bosom, replaced the little box within the trunk, locked the latter, restored the key to his waistcoat pocket, and going to the closet, began to devour the cold remains of his unfinished meal.

Rick still slept, his drunken snore beginning to grow ominously loud, as Carter, having hastily equipped himself for a journey, entered the room where the sleeper was yet extended on the floor. It required minutes to thoroughly waken the latter, and to make him comprehend what Carter was saying.

"I'm off now for Tralee, with this," touching his breast pocket in which he had placed the important paper; "and I don't know when I'll be back. Do you mind things about here, and be prepared when I return to do what I asked last night."

Rick shook himself erect, and glowered into the face of the speaker, but he did not reply.

"You can have the liberty of this place if you like till I come back. You'll find all the provisions you need up-stairs, and if anything should happen that would make it necessary

for you to see me, you can follow me to Hoolahan's—I'll drop in there every day while I shall be gone."

Without farther farewell he departed, walking down the street with that all-important and overbearing air which the consciousness of a little power gives to mean and craven souls. There was no inward shrinking, nor impulse of shame at the dastardly part he was acting; such emotions had been stifled long since, and for years he had worked but for one infernal aim. Toward that aim he strode, regardless of what he might cruelly demolish on the way.

CHAPTER XII.

IMPRISONED.

Once more imprisoned! Young O'Donoghue looked round on the bare stone walls, familiar from his former imprisonment previous to his transportation, and it seemed but a day since he had stood in that identical spot, and felt for the first time all the horrors of incarceration. The numerous events of the past few months rushed to his mind—his trial, the verdict, the sensation caused in the crowded court-room by the agonizing scream of his sister when that verdict was delivered, his sentence, his desolate voyage to Australia, his hard prison life there, his escape, due to the faithful Tighe a Vohr; his ardent hope of being able to achieve something for Ireland's independence; his brief, blissful meeting with Nora; his sudden, painful re-arrest; and now, at the close of it all, death—too surely he felt that such would be the end. He threw himself on the wretched bed and covered his face with his hands, giving himself up to the most gloomy thoughts. He was so young to die; and to die, too, without having given one blow for the land he loved so well; to have all his enthusiasm crushed in an ignominious death, before it should find vent in one act which could aid the struggling cause; to be torn from the side of the bright creature whose look of anguish as he was hurried from her continually haunted him, were reflections which cut into his soul. He groaned in spirit, and clasped his hands tighter about his eyes, as if to shut out the vision of her face; but after a little calmer, and even somewhat hopeful thoughts returned. His early boyhood appeared before him—the happy years spent in the old home, when his father lived, and Nora, and Clare, and Father

O'Connor and he were all as united and affectionate as though they were bound by the natural ties of kindred. He remembered their first sorrow when Father O'Connor was sent to college; their next grief, two years after, when Carroll himself, who was three years younger, followed Father O'Connor to a college in France. His recall because of his father's death; pecuniary troubles, owing to his father's boundless charity; and finally, the loss of their ancient and beautiful home. His mind was vividly picturing all, but in every scene stood Nora McCarthy; her gravity of character remarkable even in early youth, her gentleness to the veriest menial, her charity, seeking outlets which she intended should be known alone to God, but which accident, and the garrulous tongues of those she benefited, sometimes revealed; her sympathy with the cause of her country; her noble admonitions to Carroll himself; and above all her simple and ardent piety which dictated every act, all pressed upon the young man with a force and sweetness which strangely cheered and stimulated him. He rose to a sitting posture and took from his bosom a little silver crucifix, Nora's gift to him on their betrothal. He pressed it to his lips again and again, and finally dropped to his knees to say the prayers she loved, and of which he had such dire need.

The guard continued to pace with monotonous tread the corridor without the cell, and indistinct sounds from the busy world above him floated to his ears. A patch of the blue sky was visible from his grated window, and through the bars a sunbeam suddenly struggled, falling athwart the floor and bathing him in its light as he knelt. It seemed like an omen of good cheer, and he rose strangely comforted and strengthened. He knew that he was more strongly guarded than on the occasion of his former imprisonment, and he doubted not but that his privileges would be more restricted, perhaps even to the cruel extremity of forbidding all visits from his friends.

Tighe a Vohr had won his way to him before, under diffi-

culties well-nigh as great, and Carroll felt that the faithful fellow would spare no effort to gain access to him now.

The step of the guard paused at the cell door, the bolt was shot back, the heavily-studded door swung open, and Carter entered. The unaffected smile which broke over Carroll's face, his exclamation of joy, and forward movement to welcome his visitor, all told the latter that his true reputation as yet had not been revealed to the prisoner.

"My dear boy!"

He was embracing young O'Donoghue with well simulated, frantic affection, pretending even to be moved to tears at meeting him under such painful circumstances.

"I never heard of your arrest till yesterday morning, when Father O'Connor told me; it gave me a shock; I could not rest till I had seen you, and it is only by bribes and influence that I am at last admitted to you. Keep up your heart, my dear boy; you shall not be here long. I think I can secure means of escape, only we must be cautious."

He looked carefully about the cell, and walking to the door, which had been closed and bolted on the outside, listened for a moment; the only sound that reached him was the step of the guard. Satisfied, he returned to Carroll.

"Carroll O'Donoghue, do you trust me?"

The question was put so suddenly and so earnestly that the young man was startled.

"Certainly, Morty; why do you ask?"

"Because,"—Carter folded his arms, dropped his head till his chin almost rested on his breast, and spoke with such an assumption of sadness that the impulsive, tender-hearted young fellow was deeply touched—"because," repeated Carter, "my character has been vilified and blackened, till the whole country is against me. What has a man but his character? and mine they have taken. Don't touch me, Carroll O'Donoghue, don't speak to me, but bid me to begone from your presence, for I stand before you accused of treachery and robbery."

"What *do* you mean?" broke in Carroll, painfully excited.

"I mean this,"—lifting his head and straightening himself as if with the proud consciousness of his innocence—"that I have enemies about who have been defaming every action and word of mine. I became familiar with the English soldiers, I won the favor of the English officers, I was permitted free access to the barracks; but what did I do it for?—to help the cause I would die to serve; and I did help the cause, and help it well. My information warned the boys many a time, and saved them. But what do they say of me now?—that I have betrayed them, and worse than that, they say it is I who have betrayed you, Carroll O'Donoghue; you whose life I saved when you were a child, you whom I carried in my arms when you were a little boy and tired from the sports of the day, you, the son of that man who trusted me as if I was his brother, you that I love as I would my own son——"

He stopped suddenly as if his voice had broken from emotion.

"These are ridiculous charges," said O'Donoghue, his lip curling with scorn.

"Nevertheless," resumed Carter, "they are the charges that are brought against me, and my enemies have done even worse; they have made your sister and Miss McCarthy deem me their bitter foe,—neither one of the young ladies will give me a civil look—and they have gone to live with Father Meagher in order to be protected against me—me their guardian, and, Heaven knows, their best friend."

Again his head fell, and his voice assumed the sadness which he knew would not fail to touch his youthful listener.

"This is dreadful!" exclaimed the young man.

Carter looked up.

"If it touches *you* so deeply, how must it wound me? And there is yet more: Father Meagher told me to my face that he did not trust me, and when I entreated young Father O'Connor to tell me *his* opinion, his answer was that he too

believed me guilty of all that was reported of me! Oh Carroll, pity me!" He took a step forward to the young man, and let his hands drop to his sides as if in the very abandonment of sorrow. "I am getting to be an old man; my heart had few loves in this world, but even those have been torn from it; and now, if you too believe these wretched lies, and spurn me, I have nothing left to live for."

"Never!" answered Carroll impetuously; "the *world* may turn against you, Morty, but I shall retain my trust in, and my affection for you, and I shall make Nora, and my sister, and Father Meagher, and Father O'Connor, know how wronged and calumniated you have been."

"That is just what you must not do," answered Carter.

"What!" burst from Carroll, "not permit me to defend you?"

"No! I will have no defense made for me until I can myself *prove* the falsity of the charges which have been brought against me, and that I shall be able to do when you, Carroll O'Donoghue, have, through my means, escaped. They say that I have betrayed you; let your freedom, gained through me, give the lie to that; Miss McCarthy now believes me to be her foe; let her marriage with you, which shall be speedy through my efforts, show her her error. Your sister thinks I would gloat over her poverty; let the little property which I possess, and which I shall deed to her, prove that she has wronged me. I ask only to live to accomplish these things, and then, poor, old, lonely, desolate Morty Carter will retire where his shadow will never again cross the path of friend or foe."

Carroll, in the ardor of his sympathy, sprung forward and caught Carter's hands, wringing them hard.

"Morty, do not take this so to heart; and believe me when I assure you of *my* trust and affection!"

"I do," was the response, sadly spoken, "believe that you trust me now, and that you will continue to trust me until you have heard *their* story, and——"

Carroll interrupted: "They told me nothing when I saw

them on the night of my arrest; nothing of you save to mention your name in an incidental manner."

"I can't account for that," replied Carter; "but never fear, you'll hear it all soon enough, and then you too will turn against me."

"Never! I swear to you that I never shall; it would require proof before my very eyes; such proof as should compel from you an open avowal of your guilt, before I could believe aught against you, Morty."

"Will you swear to me then, my dear boy, that no matter what they tell you, how fiercely they may denounce me, how firmly they may believe the evil that is spoken of me, *you* will not believe it—that you will not suffer your trust in me to be diminished in the least?"

"Willingly, Morty; I swear to all that without hesitation."

"And will you further swear to say nothing about me,—not to mention even that I have been here to see you—that you will simply listen to all they say, without putting in one word about me, good or bad?"

"Well, since it gratifies you, yes; but it certainly will be very hard for me to listen calmly while you are being vilified."

"Only for a time, my dear boy; only for a time, and then you shall rejoice with me in the full proof of my innocence. And now, there is the guard coming to let me out,"—as some one paused at the cell door. "My plan for your escape will be matured in a day or two; till then keep up your courage and remember your promise to me."

The iron bolt was shot back with an ominous click, the heavy door swung open, and Carter, wringing hard the hand of his ward, passed without; another instant, and Carroll O'Donoghue was again a solitary prisoner.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE WIDOW'S REPLY.

In a small, dingy back room, situated in the poorest quarter of Tralee, a queer, crabbed little man sat smoking; the *dudheen* was well blackened, and the puffs arose from it in so precise and systematic a manner that they seemed to be following some plan in the smoker's mind. A small, old-fashioned table, littered with writing materials, was before him, and about the room was scattered a fantastical medley of furniture, the arrangement of which was marked by the disorder and want of cleanliness which told of the utter absence of a woman's hand. The occupant himself was in little better condition; from his half-soiled linen, profusely visible above his waistcoat, to the dusty shoes worn into large and ungainly shape by numerous excrescences on his feet, he had the same musty, neglected look as his grim bachelor apartment. His face, indented with wrinkles, and brown with freckles, could not boast of an even feature, and his little, round, bald head was ornamented at the sides with tufts of gray hair tortured into the semblance of a curl.

A bold knock suddenly interrupted his cogitations; he seemed to be in no hurry to admit his visitor, for he drew another whiff from his pipe, and then took it slowly out of his mouth, as if he regretted being obliged to part with it for even a short time. The knock was repeated, and the visitor, apparently impatient, attempted to admit himself; but the door was locked.

"Ah!" said the queer occupant of the room, with a grunt of satisfaction; "foiled that time; don't be so hasty, my friend, whoever you are, to get into a gentleman's apartment."

By this time he had laid his pipe carefully down, and shaking himself out of his chair, he proceeded leisurely to the door. The knock was again repeated ; still the grim little man did not hasten his movements ; he had a key to turn, and a bolt to shoot back, and a spike to take out, and by the time that all these preparations were completed, and the door stood fairly open, the visitor's impatience had not decreased.

"May I never be drowned in a mud pool, but it's Tighe a Vohr ! " burst from the strange little man, startled out of his wonted phlegmatic manner by his delighted astonishment. It was Tighe a Vohr, but in such a costume that, as he himself had expressed it, hardly his own mother would know him —knee-breeches, body-coat, white vest, a spotless choker, and surmounting his mass of short, brown curls, his own, old, worn hat, presenting a most ludicrous contrast to the rest of his dress.

"Where *did* you come from ? " pursued the little man, "and what are you doing in such a dress as that ? "—shaking both Tighe's hands vigorously, and drawing him into the room, forgetting in his eager delight to close the door. But Tighe had no desire to be stared at by the prying eyes of other dwellers in the house who might happen to pass, and as soon as he had extricated himself from the friendly grasp, he closed and locked the door.

"You may well ask," he replied, returning to the little man, "how I kem to have such a dress as this, bad luck to it ! it has me so bothered that I can't think a sthraight thought," —ruefully surveying himself back and front. "But sit down, Corny, an' I'll tell you all about it ; it's a long an' a divartin' story."

Corny obeyed, forgetting, in his interest, to resume his pipe, and Tighe seated himself near. In his own ludicrous, and yet sometimes pathetic manner, he told the tale of his trip to Australia, and the subsequent events.

"And you are here, now, servant to an English officer ? bedad it's the quare things you turn your hand to, Tighe."

"Yis," answered Tighe; "an' there's no knowin' what I'll do next, do you understand, Corny? I'll do any mortal thing that'd help the masther."

"I do, Tighe, an' them are the sentiments I admire; you are your mother's own son, Timothy Carmody, or in the Irish of it, Tighe a Vohr."

"Do you see now," pursued Tighe, drawing his chair closer to that of his listener, "I'll make mesel' a favorite in the barracks there; not one o' thim suspects me intintions; Captain Crawford tuk the greatest likin' to me intoirely, an' between one an' the other o' thim, keepin' me eyes an' me ears open, mebbe I'll ketch many a bit o' information that'll be for the masther's binefit. An' that's what brought me here this mornin',—to have you help me. I was mortally afeerd I wouldn't find you,—that you'd be gone out of the ould place, or that somethin' happened you, or the loike, seein' it's so long since I laid eyes on you."

"No, Tighe, I'm wedded to my surroundings. On the day that your mother married Timothy Carmody, I sed to mesel', 'henceforth, Corny O'Toole, let your heart be dead to the natural affections; let the things of nature be your wife and children, and make no changes—stay in the one spot, and let time reconcile you to the fact that if you had been beforehand with Timothy Carmody, it is Mrs. O'Toole your mother would be, Tighe, and you, you would be my son, Timothy O'Toole.'"

In the excess of his feelings he leaned across and wrung Tighe's hand.

"An' why didn't you ax her since, Corny? she's a widdy this many a year, an' be me sowl, I don't think she'd refuse you."

The little man arose.

"Is it desecrate the ashes of her widowed heart by a proposal now, when her husband is in his cold grave? Tim Carmody, do not so disrespect my years an' my gray hairs." He touched his sidelocks with melodramatic gesture.

"*Tatther an' ages!* it isn't whin her husband was alive that you'd be poppin' the question to her?" broke in Tighe.

"No, Mr. Carmody," with a tragic action of his arms, "nor shall I now disturb the beautiful serenity of her widowed feelings by such an offer. I honor your mother,"—placing his hand on his heart—"and I will leave her to repose her love in the cold grave of her lamented husband."

He sat down, wiping his face.

"Well," said Tighe, "we'll not moind about that little matther for the present. I want your help wid this; you tuk in a while ago, all that I tould you about the letther I med the quarthermasther write to one Widdy Moore?"

Corny nodded his head.

"Well, I want you now to write an answer as if it kem from the Widdy Moore—that's what brought me here this mornin'; he expected an answer last night, but I tould him that the widdy wasn't in, but that I left the letther, an' also how I left word that I'd go afther an answer this mornin'. Do you see, now, Corny, he's a soft soort o' fellow that it's not hard to get round at all, an' if I can sthring him for a while wid something loike this, I may be able to turn him to account. I got out o' him last night the perticler part of the jail where Mr. O'Donoghue is, an' how his thrial is likely to come off afore a great while. Sure it's your business to be writin' letthers an' the loike,"—glancing at the littered table.

"It used to be, Tighe, it used to be, afore people got to have the book larnin' themselves; but now, since they've spiled us with their national schools, and their other divil's improvements, the sorra much poor Corny gets to do. Once in a while I've a love-letther to write, or an offer of marriage, or the like, where big words are a-wantin', but it's not often; times are not what they used to be;" and the old man sighed touchingly.

"Read this," said Tighe, proffering the letter which he had induced the simple quartermaster to write to the Widow Moore.

"That's a fine employment of words," said Corny, when he had read the missive slowly and aloud. Then he turned to the superscription, reading that with the same attentive leisure.

"And how did you come to know this Mistress Moore?" he asked.

"The divil a bit o' me knew her at all till I heerd the *omadhaun* of a quarthermasther make mintion o' her, thin I med a bould guess at the rest. Sez I to mesel', whin I eyed him for a while, an' saw the hesitatin' way he was in about the writin'—sez I to mesel', 'you're in love;' an' faith, Corny, whin a fellow's in love there's not much to be got out o' him be the way o' rayson or common sinse."

Corny nodded an earnest assent.

"I found that out be the masther himsel'," continued Tighe, "for he wouldn't be led, nor dhrove, bekaise o' his love for a purty girrel, till he got himsel' into the schrape he's in now. Well, that's neither here nor there, but, as I was sayin', I approached the subjict o' this tormintin' widdy——"

"Spake respectful, me boy, of the widows," interrupted Mr. O'Toole, "your mother, the honored Mrs. Carmody, is one."

Tighe stifled a laugh and proceeded:

"I approached the subject in the way I tould you, an' to me own wondher I med the right hit entoirely. But I wasn't widout makin' sly inquiries, an' I found out that this Misthress Moore *is* a young, gay, dashin' widdy that sets half o' the officers be the ears wid love o' her; sure that was playin' into me hands complately, an' if I can kape up the game long enough to help me to get seein' the masther, I'll be very thankful."

"I see," answered Corny; "well, we will have to be very careful with the answer, Tighe; it wouldn't do to be putting an offer of marriage in it."

"Not at all, sure that would be the decidin' part, an' I must kape her away from that for a while. No, tell him in a delicate way o' the great and sudden divarsion his letther gev

her; an' how she'd loike him to be very saycret about the matther for the prisent, an' that he mustn't moind if she gives him could looks, for it will be only for a while, an' that her heart is burnin' wid thoughts o' him all the toime; an' oh, Corny!—begorra I was forgittin'—tell him that she doesn't want him to be makin' delusions to the letthers in her prisence, an'——"

"You mean allusions, Mr. Carmody," interrupted Mr. O'Toole, pompously.

"You are right, Corny; what wid the bewildherments o' the toimes the book larnin' is gone clane out o' me head. Well, she doesn't want him to be makin' allusions to the letthers in her prisence—she wants him to be spachless, for faith if he don't I'll be discovered, an' iverything will be spiled. Now, will you do that, Corny?"

"I will," said the little man, drawing the writing materials to him.

"Put big words in it, Corny; there's nothin' loike thim for touchin' the heart."

Mr. O'Toole wrote with all diligence, and soon produced:

"DEAREST MR. GARFIELD:

When the sentiments of the female heart are touched, the tongue finds it troublesome and difficult to give them utterance. Your beautiful and noble letter stirred all the emotions of my susceptible nature. The promulgation of your deliberate affection for a widowed and bereaved youthful female woke in my sensitive and flattered soul responsive echoes."

"Illigant!" broke in Tighe, clapping his hands, "illigant intoirely."

"I accept your sentiments, dear and noble Mr. Garfield, and I intend to cherish them in all the recesses of my desolate and craving heart. With suffocating feelings of the deepest regret, I beg you to be speechless about all this for the present—cruel circumstances compel this dreadful necessity. Meet me, esteemed and revered sir, as if you knew me not, for a little while; be silent about everything, and after a few days my bursting heart will be ready to reveal itself.

Till then, believe me as undivided and undividable as yourself.

THE WIDOW MOORE."

"Give us yer fist, Corny!" said Tighe in the exuberance of his delight; and he shook that useful member of Mr. O'Toole's body till the latter gentleman was fain to beg him to desist.

"It's satisfactory," said Corny, trying to assume an indifference to the praise of his young friend, but inwardly glowing with pleasure; for if there was one weakness which Mr. O'Toole possessed, apart from the Widow Carmody, it was his ambition to gain fame as an elegant letter-writer.

"An' you tuk particler pains to make the han'writin' small, I see," said Tighe, examining the superscription, when at length the letter was addressed, sealed, and given into his possession. "It takes you, Corny, an' begorra it always tuk you to do what you set yer moind to. I'm only surprised at one thing, how you iver missed me mother." There was a roguish twinkle in Tighe a Vohr's eyes, but simple, credulous Corny did not perceive it, and he answered:

"I didn't ask her in time, my boy; I procrastinated."

"That was bad, Corny; but kape up yer heart; mebbe, if things turns out well, I'll be able mesel' to put in a good word for you."

Mr. O'Toole drew himself up, and folded his arms on his swelling breast.

"Mr. Carmody, I have already expressed to you my feelings on that tender and delicate subject; respect them, sir, and do not force me to disturb the emotions of your mother's widowed heart, so long buried in the grave of her lamented husband."

"Faith it's the could place you want her heart to be in," muttered Tighe, but in too low a voice for Corny to hear. The latter gentleman maintained his lofty attitude, proudly assuring himself that his countenance was expressing at once

noble scorn and heroic resignation, whereas his yellow, wrinkled face was pursed up into a look so ludicrously affected that Tighe had to hasten his adieu lest he should laugh in the little man's face.

CHAPTER XIV.

CORNY O'TOOLE.

CAPTAIN CRAWFORD was a manly specimen of the English officer; dashing, genial, fun-loving, prone to good nature, proud of his profession, devoted to his country, ardent, generous, brave, he won with little effort the confidence of his superior officers and the enthusiastic affection of his men; but no one of these praiseworthy qualities could eradicate or diminish a fierce hatred against those of the Irish who dared to foster a thought of rebellion toward the English government; such he would crush with ruthless hand, and no measure enforced for their submission was too severe for his approval. He hated the very name Fenian, and he hailed with delight every scheme for the capture of the devoted fellows. Yet his purse was often open to relieve cases of destitution accidentally brought to his notice, and his laugh was ready and hearty at any sally of Irish wit or exploit of Irish cunning, even though the victim of both might be himself.

For Tighe a Vohr he conceived a peculiar fancy; the fellow's true humor, his laughable simplicity, his apparent frankness, and the ardor with which he seemed to serve his new master, all made the latter regard him with something akin to affection, and he was disposed to treat Tighe with more than ordinary favor.

Tighe, with his natural sharpness, divined all this before he had served a fortnight in his new capacity, and it required little effort on his part to act in a manner which should increase the officer's regard for him. On the day subsequent to his delivery into Mr. Garfield's hand of the letter written by Corny O'Toole, and supposed to come from the Widow Moore,

Tighe, busy in the officer's private apartments, was chuckling to himself as he mentally saw again the quartermaster's expression of countenance when he read that remarkable composition. Indeed, the soldier's face had afforded a wonderful study; astonishment, perplexity, a mixture of triumph and pleasure, some disappointment, and a long, wondering look at Tighe, which the latter endured without a muscle betraying his inward mirthful convulsion, all had succeeded each other on the countenance of the astounded and bewildered quartermaster.

"Isn't it to yer sathisfaction?" Tighe had asked when the soldier's eyes had turned from his face to the letter again; and the mystified fellow had replied:

"It is, and it is not; I can't understand it; it seems a strange way for a lady to write—so different from our English girls."

"Yer *English girrels!*" Tighe had burst in; "didn't I tell you afore that there was no comparison betune thim? no more than there is betune a well-bred filly an' a cantherin' jackass. It's the slap an' the dash that our Irish wimen want, an' not the aisy-goin' ways o' yer *English girrels.*"

"What did she say to you?" the befooled quartermaster had asked; and Tighe had answered:

"Is it the loike o' me you'd have to sthand afore a lady loike her? it's aisy to see you're not rightly mannered in yer counthry; if you wor, it's not such a question as that you'd be puttin' to me,"—inwardly exulting as he saw the quartermaster bite his lip; "sure I gev the letther to the sarvant to take to her, an' she was out, as I tould you afore, but whin I wint agin the sarvant had the answer ready. An' now if you'd loike to have me compose another letther for you——."

"No," had been the decisive reply, "I'll wait awhile first."

"Well," Tighe had replied, "whin you're ready, yer honor, I'm at yer sarvice; an' you nad'nt be afeerd to thrust me, for I'd sooner cut the tongue out o' me mouth than tell one word on so dacint an' nice-spoken a gintleman as yersel'; but whin Misthress Moore becomes Mrs. Garfield, an' you're happy an' thrivin', mebbe thin you'd remimber poor Tighe a Vohr."

And Tighe, as he now distinctly thought of all this, could hardly restrain an outward chuckle, but at that moment Captain Crawford entered the room with another officer; it required but one look for Tighe to recognize in him the same who had conducted the arrest of Carroll O'Donoghue—Captain Dennier. He was not afraid of recognition by the captain, being confident that the latter had obtained but passing glances of him on the night of Carroll's arrest, and he felt that his present dress would prove an effectual disguise; but, in order to be respectful, he passed to an inner room, where he feigned to be very busy. Never, however, were his wits so keen. He managed adroitly to leave the door between the apartments carelessly ajar, and to cause his duties to take him frequently to the spot. Captain Crawford was evidently heedless of Tighe's vicinity, for he continued a conversation with Dennier which seemed to have been commenced before their entrance.

"Yes," he said, speaking warmly, "Lord Heathcote must surely give credit to you for this success; you certainly have been quick and clever about it."

Captain Dennier did not reply; he seemed absorbed in gloomy thought.

"What are to be the next moves?" pursued the speaker, looking somewhat anxiously into the face of his friend.

Captain Dennier replied in a low voice, but not too low for Tighe's oversharpened hearing:

"Lord Heathcote's arrival here is expected daily, and this Mortimer Carter, the same who has been supplying information to the government for some time past, is here, waiting to deliver to his lordship a valuable paper, a paper which he has told me criminates not only this unfortunate prisoner, O'Donoghue, but which contains the most conclusive evidence against the unhappy wretches who were arrested the other day at that attack on the barracks."

That piece of information worked strangely on the eagerly listening Tighe. His face lengthened itself, and his eyes grew in size till they threatened to burst from their sockets.

"Be me sowl," he said mentally, "that's ould Morty Carther he manes."

"Then," continued the speaker, "the prisoner will stand his trial."

There was a touch of sadness in the last tones that struck unpleasantly on the ear of Captain Crawford. Striking his hand on his knee, he said in his hearty way:

"Upon my honor, Walter, if I didn't know you as I do, I would say that you sympathized with those Fenian scoundrels."

"No," was the reply, "I love England too well to sympathize with any rebellion against her, but I cannot help feeling for the spirit which through all oppression is still defiant. My heart quivers at the sights of distress I meet so often, and I have found so much that is noble and kindly in the Irish character that I find myself often pitying where previously I was wont to condemn."

"By Jove!" laughed the surprised, and yet amused, Captain Crawford, "we shall have you transferring your allegiance, and commanding a Fenian raid before long; what will my sister Helen say to that, I wonder—you were her model, you know. Oh, don't color so, Walter; it will be all right one day, I suppose; only one of her last counsels to me was to make you my study. I wonder if she would approve of my imitating your conversion to the side of the Irish, and Fenianism to boot. Perhaps you would even emulate that daring scoundrel, Captain O'Connor; they say he is marvelous in the matter of disguises, and report has it that he has been in the very heart of a surrounded district, enrolling for this d——d Irish Republic, and perfecting his plans under the very eyes of the government officers."

"I admire his gallantry and his fealty to his cause," replied Dennier with sparkling eyes; "thus far he has shown wonderful skill and courage, and doubtless, if his last bold movement had not been checked, it would have brought more serious results to England than the scare it gave her"

"Scare!" repeated Crawford, throwing himself back in the chair he had taken, and laughing loud and heartily, "why the way those wires worked sending alarm messages to headquarters, and the manner in which the troops were rushed off, was enough to make O'Connor himself laugh when he heard of the commotion he had created."

"Yes," replied Dennier, "and his mirth would be all the heartier if he knew how Horseford is taking to himself the credit of having stopped the rebellion down here."

Crawford straightened himself in his seat, saying eagerly:

"Ah! you probably hold the opinion about that that I do."

"Perhaps: my theory is that the failure at Chester has had more to do with the comparative cessation of the rebellion all over Ireland than all Horseford's boasted soldierly skill and executive ability."

"You are right," answered Crawford, thoughtfully; then, as if glad to change the subject, he said with a sudden alteration of voice: "I have not told you about my new valet—a perfect specimen."

"Och, begorra!" muttered Tighe, "I'm in for it now; they'll have me out there on exhibition, an' mebbe that divil o' an officer would remimber afther all that he seen me in Dhrommacohol." Quick as thought he seized the blacking used for his master's boots, and smearing different parts of his face with it, he fell to polishing the first shoe he could find.

"Tighe!" called his master.

Tighe appeared in the doorway, shoe and brush in hand, and his head hanging down in well-feigned confusion. "If you'd be afther excusin' me, yer honor; I'm not persintable."

Captain Crawford laughed, and even Captain Dennier's grave countenance relaxed into a smile at sight of the besmeared face surmounted by a shock of curly brown hair now in tangled disorder from the frequent running of Tighe's fingers through it.

"Very well, Tighe, we accept your apology," said Captain

Crawford; and Tighe, with a bow which he had learned from an itinerant dancing master, and which provoked another mirthful burst from his master, and a more animated smile from Captain Dennier, returned to the room he had left. He could hear, even while he pretended to be noisily engaged, Captain Crawford detailing in most ludicrous fashion the circumstances of his first meeting with Tighe and Shaun; but although the captain's own laugh rung out with infectious merriment, it seemed to produce little of the same effect on his companion; grave, silent, the latter's thoughts appeared to be far, and unpleasantly away.

"Egad, Dennier!" broke from Captain Crawford at last, "you are a changed man since you came to Ireland. On my honor, I shall begin to surmise that you are really contemplating going over to the Irish."

Captain Dennier smiled, but he did not reply, as if he deemed the remark too trifling to deserve an answer.

"Come, old fellow," resumed his companion, "you were wont to give me your confidence; confide in me now, and tell me the trouble."

The earnestness, the affection in the tones seemed to rouse and to touch the young officer. He replied with unwonted spirit:

"On my soul, Harry, I wish I could tell you; I cannot even explain it to myself; it is a nameless something which has seemed to press upon my spirits from the moment that I set foot in Ireland. It may be that Lord Heathcote's manner to me has increased it. You know, owing to my absence in India, I did not see him for a long time; since my return, however, our interviews have been somewhat frequent, and the close of every meeting is only to leave me more discouraged, more unhappy, more perplexed with myself than I was before."

"And yet," replied Crawford, "you have been the envy of half the titled young fellows in London, because of that very interest which Lord Heathcote has always taken in you. You have told me repeatedly that you owe everything to him."

"I do; the claims of no common gratitude bind me to him. Of my birth and early history I know nothing save that I have been told how both my parents died before I was well ushered into the world, and that happening to reside on his lordship's estate, and having been brought to his notice by some service rendered to him by my father, he took singular compassion upon me, an unclaimed orphan, found a nurse for me, caused me to be educated, and I know that he has procured for me all the appointments I have ever held. Thus you see how much *his* interests ought to be mine; and they are. I have striven to show by my conduct in every particular that his kindness was not misplaced, that the boy for whom he so nobly provided was not an entirely unworthy recipient of his bounty; but his demeanor to me when we meet proves that he thinks otherwise. His coldness chills me, his taunts at my ill success sting me, and I have often felt like flinging my commission at his feet, thanking him for the past, and betaking myself to some far distant scene."

"No, no, Walter," said Captain Crawford, "do nothing so rash. Wait; things are becoming brighter; you have achieved success now in the capture of this Australian convict, and his lordship must at least in that recognize your ability."

"But that which harrows my soul most," resumed Captain Dennier, "is a singular overmastering impulse to love this cold, stern man; it springs up at every sight of him; it haunts me in my dreams, and this is why I am such a puzzle to myself." He leaned his head upon his hand, and yielded again to gloomy and abstracted thought.

Tighe, still brushing vigorously at boots that had been polished and repolished, was as vigorously thinking and planning.

"I must foind a way for deprivin' ould Carther o' that paper, an' I'll have to be murtherin' quick about it. The first thing'll be to foind out where the ould wretch kapes himsel'. I haven't seen tail nor hide o' him since I kem here; an' thin

there's Father Meagher, an' the young ladies disthracted wid grief in Dhrommacohol, an' waitin' for me to go back an' give thim news; an' there's the masther himsel' that I haven't found the manes o' communicatin' wid yet. May the saints deliver us, but it's the power o' business I have on hand; well, whin the paper is got from ould Carther I'll attind to the rest."

CHAPTER XV.

CAPTAIN CRAWFORD'S VALET.

On the morning succeeding the events detailed in the last chapter, there was unusual bustle and excitement in that portion of the barracks reserved for the officers. The cause of the unusual commotion was an arrival, and the blazoned carriage and thorough-bred, gayly-trapped horses gave evidence of the wealth and title of their owner. Lackeys were in abundance, and the alacrity and obsequiousness with which the soldiers who were lounging about pressed forward to the service of the solitary occupant showed the latter to be more than an ordinary commanding officer. He waved his hand in response to the many respectful salutes which greeted him as he alighted from his carriage, and ascended the steps of the entrance with grave, soldierly mien. Numerous medals glittered upon his breast, and his firm, rapid step, and the quick, keen glance which he threw about him, bespoke one accustomed to command. An apartment had been as sumptuously prepared for him as the haste and exigencies of circumstances would allow, and to this he was immediately conducted. Having entered the room, he turned to an attendant, saying:

"I desire to see Captain Dennier—summon him."

The servant departed on the errand, and the officer, divesting himself of his sword and ornamented hat, threw himself into a large easy chair. His grave, handsome face was deeply indented with lines that told of no easy, nor peaceful life, and his firm set mouth evinced the iron will which so often brings more of suffering than satisfaction to its possessor. His abundant gray hair, stiff and strong, as if it partook of the nature of its owner, was worn somewhat

long, so that it fell on the collar of his coat, and added strangely to an already remarkable appearance.

Captain Dennier was ushered into the apartment. He was somewhat flushed, because of the haste of the summons, and because of his own agitated thoughts which started into wild being at the very prospect of an interview with this man to whom he was so deeply indebted. Yet, withal, he was so handsome, so graceful, and bore himself with so marked a deference, yet a deference that was entirely free from aught servile or cringing, that an expression of pleasure shone for an instant in the cold, stern eyes before him.

"So you have achieved some success at last—the capture of this escaped convict."

The tone of the voice was cold, and the flush deepened on the young captain's cheeks. He bowed in response, but remained silent.

"I have come down here in great haste," the cold, hard voice resumed, "and I must leave again by noon. Evidence is pouring in from all sides of the country sufficient to convict every prisoner we now hold, and sufficient also to implicate many more upon whom the government has a watch. Preparations for speedy trials are making in Dublin, and it is probable that this Carroll O'Donoghue will be one of the first to be tried. He is under very strict guard, I believe."

Captain Dennier again bowed.

"No one should be permitted to see him. I understand that he has been one of the most daring and dangerous of these Fenians."

He paused, and the young officer, slightly advancing, said: "Permit me to inform your lordship that Morty Carter has been waiting here a day or two to see you; he has an important paper to deliver."

"Morty Carter," his lordship repeated, "I have not time to him see this morning; let him give the paper into your keeping, and you can forward it by some trusty person to Dublin Castle."

"Captain Crawford, your lordship, has received an order to start for Dublin this evening; can I intrust it to him?"

"The very thing—here! I will write an order for you to obtain the paper from Carter, so that he may not hesitate to give it up; and if he should hint at the reward he has been promised, tell him that on the conclusion of the trials I shall make good my word."

He repaired to a little writing cabinet which stood near, and indited the order.

Captain Dennier received it with a bow, but he did not turn to leave the room as his lordship evidently expected. With his color each moment increasing, and a slight agitation visible in his very grasp of the paper which he had just received, he began suddenly:

"Your lordship——"

The nobleman turned shortly from the cabinet which he had been adjusting, and coldly confronted the speaker. The opening of his speech seemed to have restored the young man's self-possession. He stood erect, every trace of embarrassment vanished, and it was with his wonted fearless, yet respectful manner, that he continued:

"Something which has weighed upon me for months, and of which I have hesitated to speak, must at last be said now. I owe your lordship so much that my very gratitude renders the subject a painful one; but I have long felt that you are disappointed in me. Had another received the benefits you have so kindly dispensed to me such an one, by at least his talent or tact in the affairs intrusted to him, would have repaid your bounty; I have done neither. The simple, though faithful, effort which I have made to perform my duty is all that I have to offer in return for your patronage. But your lordship has evidently expected more; and perhaps in your kindness you would still bind yourself to continue favor to one who has done so little to merit it. I beg you to release yourself from such an engagement. Feeling my incapacity to win renown or success in my present profession, I would

respectfully resign the commission your lordship has so kindly procured for me, and seek my living afar from these scenes in one of the humble walks of life, never forgetting, however, your lordship, to whom, under Providence, I owe all that I am."

Impassive, cold, Lord Heathcote's face did not betray by the movement of a muscle whether any emotion had been awakened by the appeal, though its last words had been spoken in a tone of touching sadness.

"You claim to be grateful," he said at length, his stern eyes fastening more piercingly upon the young man.

The latter bowed, and his lordship continued:

"If I should make your obedience to my wish the test of that gratitude, would you object?"

There was an instant's hesitation on the part of the young officer, as if he divined what was coming and shrunk from it.

Lord Heathcote seemed to understand the hesitation. He said sternly: "Let your answer be at once, sir, full and free. I shall put my own interpretation upon it."

The vigor of his voice, the severity of his mien, were in some measure appalling. Captain Dennier could not resist their singular influence over himself. He answered: "I make no objection to your lordship's imposing what test you please."

"Then, if you would prove your gratitude, remain as you are."

He waved him away, rung for an attendant, and strode to a distant part of the room.

It was with no enviable feelings that Captain Dennier hurried to his own apartment. Loathing himself for his weakness in yielding where he had intended to be so firm, indignant at that very authority which his obligations to Lord Heathcote engendered, perplexed with his own emotions toward the nobleman, weary of his perpetual inward struggle between his duty to his country and the sympathies so largely and strong-

ly enlisted for a suffering people, he felt all the unrest and unhappiness which wait upon a self-tormented soul. He threw himself into a chair, burying his throbbing, burning brow in his hands; then he suddenly remembered his commission to obtain a certain paper from Morty Carter. With a gesture of impatience and a face expressive of his repugnance to the whole matter, he summoned his servant and dispatched him for Carter.

Carter arrived, fawning, smiling, but secretly anxious. With haughty notice of him Captain Dennier produced the order of Lord Heathcote.

Carter looked disappointed. "I would rather give it into his lordship's hands; I could wait, if need be, or follow him."

"He does not desire you to do either," was the peremptory reply. "I have detailed his wishes to you, and any reluctance to obey on your part might be punished by an instant withdrawal of his lordship's favor; you can pursue your own course, however, Mr. Carter—I have delivered to you *my* orders."

Morty was fumbling in his bosom. "It has cost me so much time and labor to get it," he said half apologetically, taking out the paper and spreading it open before Captain Dennier.

The latter perused it carefully, reading with a kind of shock the name of Carroll O'Donoghue among the names of those appointed to important offices in the organization of the Irish Republic. He looked witheringly at his visitor. "You must have played a most treacherous part to get possession of so valuable a document as this."

"Every stratagem is fair in war," was the dogged answer, accompanied by a look that only half veiled the hate and fury aroused by the officer's remark.

"Except that of treachery," pursued Captain Dennier with covert sarcasm, which stung his listener more than would have done fierce, open accusation. The latter was goaded to the

soul. His round, red face expanded and reddened still more; his little, winking gray eyes winked faster, and his hands opened and clenched as if they would have clutched vengefully at something. He said almost savagely:

"I recognize no right by which I am to be questioned or rebuked. Your government gladly furnishes rewards for any information given of her rebellious subjects, and she does not inquire into the means by which such information is obtained. I have yet to learn by what right one of her officers takes upon himself to make such inquiries."

"You are insolent, sir," said Captain Dennier, surprised and indignant.

Carter became suddenly subdued, being not a little alarmed for the effect of the daring speech into which his passion had hurried him; he answered humbly:

"I beg pardon, sir, for speaking so boldly, but I was cut to the quick when you mentioned treachery; is it treachery to help the cause in which one's sympathies are enlisted? England has given me no grievances that I should need redress; from my own countrymen have come the wrongs which stir my soul to vengeance."

"Enough of this!" interrupted the officer, disgusted at the boldness and unwarranted freedom of the man's manner, as well as at the infamous part which the latter had been acting. "I shall give you," he continued, "an acknowledgement of my having received from your hand this paper containing information important to the government, that you may show it to Lord Heathcote."

He wrote out a careful receipt, which Carter read a second time to be certain of its accuracy. Still he did not depart.

"Have you another remark to make?" asked Captain Dennier coldly.

Carter answered with something of the dogged air which had characterized one of his former replies:

"I would like to be certain that Lord Heathcote will not forget about the reward; this will prove the most valuable

information I have given yet, and his lordship promised me that whenever I should give information as important as the present is I should be amply compensated."

"Did he stipulate the amount?" asked the officer.

"Yes; sufficient to enable me to purchase the estate that used to belong to the family of the recaptured convict, Carroll O'Donoghue; it became so encumbered by debt that it passed from his possession and is now in the market to be sold."

A sickening sensation passed over the young captain; he remembered the ancient and picturesque building which had attracted his attention on the occasion of his first visit to Dhrommacohol, and his inquiry about it, which had elicited such a pathetic response from Clare O'Donoghue. He saw again the lonely, unprotected girls, their humble little abode within sight of their former elegant home, and he looked at the flashy, vulgar Carter the would-be possessor of the ancient homestead; it was with difficulty he restrained himself from spurning the fellow.

"Go," he said, his voice slightly quivering with the scorn he could not entirely repress, "and treat with Lord Heathcote for your promised reward. He bade me assure you that he would make good his word on the conclusion of the trials; and I wish you"—despite his effort to the contrary, all the contempt which he felt for the miscreant became manifest, not alone in his voice, but in the flashing scorn of his look—"all the happiness which is the recompense of a traitor."

Without farther adieu he walked to an inner room, taking with him the paper Carter had brought, and closing the door between them.

Carter became purple with rage; it required a mighty effort to restrain himself from giving loud and profane vent to his violent passion. He waited, however, till he had reached the street, and was striding rapidly toward his daily rendezvous. Then he muttered:

"I shall make him pay dear yet for his treatment of me this day; I could have whispered something to him that would have made him civil at once; but it wasn't the time, nor it won't be the time till Carroll O'Donoghue is disposed of."

CHAPTER XVI.

SHAUN OBJECTS TO DUBLIN.

There was unusual excitement in Captain Crawford's apartments; that officer in expostulation, entreaty, reprimand, reproach, menace, almost in a breath, and Tighe a Vohr in whines, and wails, and supplications, and ludicrous apostrophes,—the latter delivered in comical asides to imaginary listeners—could all be heard distinctly in the passage leading to the rooms, and Captain Dennier, on his way thither, paused in astonishment at the uproar which greeted him. When he entered a curious sight presented itself. Tighe was on his knees, surrounded by hat-boxes, opened valises—the contents of which were indiscriminately mingled with those of a dressing-case lying inverted near—numerous boots and shoes, a full military equipment, together with every possession, private and personal, of the gallant captain. He seemed to be endeavoring to arrange them as commodities are placed in a fair, and the captain, in despair as to how his packing should ever be done in time for his hasty departure, was striding up and down the room in anger, while at the same time he was forced to be amused at the comical appearance of his valet, and more than all, by the ludicrous observations of the latter. Tighe's absurd remarks were intended to mollify the officer's temper, and to apologize for Tighe's natural awkwardness and blunders; and they were so extremely ludicrous that the captain found it impossible to be seriously indignant.

"Sure you tould me to pack up," pursued Tighe, putting the box of blacking with ferocious haste into the dressing-case, and placing on top of it indiscriminately brushes, combs, collars and cuffs, all that he could crowd into the spaces with-

out regard to adaptation or neatness; and as his master was at the further end of the room, the performance passed unobserved. "An' in Ireland, here," he continued, working for dear life, "we pack up be puttin' iverything in the middle o' the flure, jist to see what we've got, an' afther that it's aisier to stow thim into the holes an' corners, an'——"

He was interrupted by Captain Dennier's entrance.

"What do you think of it?" asked Captain Crawford, coming to meet him, and pointing to Tighe, who pretended to be too busy even to lift his eyes to the new-comer. "That's the way he is doing my packing," continued the officer, "after leaving me in a pretty lurch beside; what do you think—he positively refuses to come with me to Dublin, alleging that the climate wouldn't agree with his dog!"

"An' it wouldn't," spoke up Tighe from the depths of a valise; "Shaun'd be dead in a wake—the air'd be too sthrong for him."

"I told you he was a specimen," laughed Captain Crawford, though he was really annoyed at Tighe's determined refusal to accompany him; "and now I am in a pretty fix: I shall be obliged to take some raw recruit who will not know the first thing about his duties, and a fine mess I shall be in."

"How would this suit?" said Captain Dennier, abruptly, as in that instant he conceived a plan for helping his friend,—"to exchange valets?—mine understands his business perfectly, and will, I think, at my desire readily transfer his services to you for a while; after, when you shall have been suited, he can return to me, and I shall try to provide another place for Tighe here."

"The very thing!" exclaimed Crawford; "how bright of you to think of it; but are you sure that you will suffer no inconvenience by Tighe's blunders?"

Tighe a Vohr ventured to look up; a glance assured him that there was no danger of the recognition he feared, and growing bold from that fact, he rose, and stood with a half-confident, half-injured air before Captain Crawford: "**May I spake a word to yer honor?**"

"Considering that you have been speaking to me all the afternoon without soliciting permission, I do not see what is to hinder you now," was the laughing reply.

"Well, thin, Captain Crawford, afther sarvin' you as faithful as mesel' an' Shaun done, I ax you if it's fair or honorable to give me a characther loike that? If I blundered, why didn't you kape me blunderin' to yersel', for it was out o' pure good nature that I blundered. It's a thrue sayin' that there's little gratitude in the world." He turned away as if he were too much hurt to say more.

It would hardly have been in human nature not to have laughed at Tighe a Vohr then—his appearance, his manner, the tone in which he had spoken, were all so irresistibly droll; and even Captain Dennier, little inclined as he felt to mirth, joined in his friend's spontaneous burst of merriment. The latter said, as soon as his laughter ceased sufficiently to allow him voice:

"It will not do you any harm, Tighe; you will find your new master a very lenient one."

Tighe had resumed his packing. Both officers walked to a recess formed by one of the windows, and Captain Dennier began detailing in a very low voice the commission intrusted to him by Lord Heathcote, and which he was to transfer to Captain Crawford for final delivery in Dublin. Though Tighe strained his organs of hearing, he could only distinguish unconnected words; he fancied he heard the name of Carter, and directly he saw Captain Dennier pass to the hand of his friend an envelope out of which the latter took a carefully folded paper. He opened and perused it, then replaced it in its cover. Tighe, with his wonted sharpness, made a shrewd and lucky guess as to what might be the contents of the document. "Oh, all ye howly saints that's mintioned ivery day in the calendar," he mentally prayed, "help me now—help me to get hould o' that paper!"

The conference of the captains ended, Dennier left the apartment to send his own valet to facilitate Tighe's awkward

packing, and Crawford, divesting himself of his coat and boots, threw himself upon the bed for a brief slumber preparatory to his sudden and unwished-for journey. Tighe's eyes grew in size and shone like stars. He had seen his master deposit the envelope containing the all-important paper in some pocket about him, but whether in the inner breast pocket of his coat, or a recess closer to his person, he was unable to tell. With many a fervent mental prayer, and with noiseless motion, that he might not disturb the now soundly sleeping officer, he seized the coat and conveyed it to the inner room. He knew that he should recognize the envelope from its peculiarly shaded color, and there, as if the help he had invoked had indeed been afforded him, the first thing he drew out of the breast pocket was the identical envelope; fortunately it was still unsealed—he could substitute something for its contents which he was about to pilfer. Garfield's letter to the Widow Moore was carefully placed in an inner pocket of his own; he brought it forth; it occupied paper enough to swell the envelope to the size it had been with Carter's document within it, and disposing it in place of the article which he now abstracted, the envelope was restored to the pocket from which he had taken it, the coat returned to its former position, and Tighe himself bent once more to his packing, chuckling as he thought how the government authorities, instead of receiving the valuable information they expected, would be in possession of his own ridiculous production to the Widow Moore. Still Tighe was troubled with misgivings; he wasn't *sure* that it was the right paper, after all; he was only depending on his own shrewd conjectures, and they might be wrong; then, also, Captain Crawford might read the document again, and finding a love epistle where he had before perused valuable information of the proposed *Irish Republic*, he would instantly guess the perpetrator of the theft; and Tighe fairly trembled as he imagined the consequences. It was with many an anxious, though covert, glance that he watched the officer, when the latter, having arisen from his slumber, began hasty

preparations for departure, and every resource which Tighe's natural wit and humor suggested he unintermittingly employed to divert his master from remembering the paper which had been given into his charge. But at the very moment of departure, when Tighe was shouldering a couple of valises, and Captain Dennier's valet, now transferred to Captain Crawford, was bearing sundry small boxes to a vehicle in waiting below, the officer said suddenly:

"By Jove! I was forgetting: what did I do with that paper of Dennier's?"

The valises on Tighe's shoulder required re-adjusting just then—it became necessary to remove them from their position, and to shake and smooth them out, after which the locks had to be long and carefully tried, all of which maneuvering elicited no very gentle expressions from Captain Dennier's valet, who was impatient to have the luggage on the vehicle.

"Be aisy, man," said Tighe a Vohr, assuming a careless, jovial air, though his heart was beating like a trip hammer. "Fair an' smooth in a day niver lost yit, an' there'll be toime when you're in yer grave, an' the tip end o' yer toes turned up to the roots o' the daisies; arrah! have patience!" as the English servant, now thoroughly provoked, tried to hurry matters by attempting to take one of the valises. "Do you think that I'll let the captain run the risk o' havin' his thraps spilled out on the sthreet afore his eyes, an' nayther me nor Shaun there to help him?"

And Tighe, in his assumed indignation, stood upright, and ventured to give a broad look at Captain Crawford.

That gentleman had been searching his pockets in anxious and impatient haste; but now, simultaneously with Tighe's look, he drew the envelope forth. Tighe shook so violently that he had to cover his agitation by exclaiming:

"Faith I think it's a *magram* * I'm gettin'!"

Captain Crawford was turning over the envelope, reading the superscription,—which, had Tighe been able to read, would

* A sort of ague.

have satisfied his doubts at once—and soliloquizing: "Yes; that's it." Then, without disturbing the contents, he sealed the envelope and put it carefully back in his breast pocket.

Tighe's *magram* suddenly disappeared, and extraordinary strength and energy returned to him; he felt as if he could have carried the barracks on his back, so relieved and so buoyant were his spirits; and it was with the very heartiest of adieus, not, however, without a dash of pathetic humor, that he, attended by Shaun, saw the officer finally depart.

CHAPTER XVII.

TIGHE A VOHR'S MOUTH-PIECE.

RAT-TAT-TAT-TAT! It was a knock so loud, and so prolonged, and made with such a peculiar tattoo on the door, that Moira Moynahan paused in her work of sweeping the kitchen floor in no little consternation; then, chiding herself for her cowardice, she went, broom in hand, to admit the applicant. Tighe a Vohr with Shaun at his heels stood before her, but he looked so unlike himself in his servant dress that even while she gave a little scream of delight, her look expressed surprise, and some alarm, at his changed appearance.

"Don't moind; I'll explain it all to yer sathisfaction," he said, with an air of apology and a rueful look at himself, as he entered the house, Shaun closely following him. "But first tell me how you are,"—extending his hand, and looking as if he would like to accompany his inquiry by a more endearing token of his regard.

The proffered member was refused, and Moira, drawing back from him, put her apron to her face, and began to rock her body to and fro like one in violent grief. Tighe seemed speechless with astonishment; he rolled his eyes, scratched his head, looked at Shaun (who appeared to be as puzzled as his master), and at last, as if he must take some desperate measure, he approached Moira and attempted to pull the apron from her face. She only held it the closer, and seemed to be crying the more violently.

"In the name o' common sinse, Moira, what is the rayson o' all this? if it's mad wid me you are for stayin' away so long, why have it out at once, but don't be actin' in that outlandish fashion."

She dropped her apron; to Tighe's renewed surprise not a trace of a tear was to be seen; then she put her finger on her lip and shook her head in a most woe-begone way.

"What *is* the matther?" broke out Tighe, fast losing his temper.

Still her finger pressed to her lips and her sorrowful shake of the head was his only answer.

"Well, may I niver, if it isn't enough to make a saint swear; here am I goin' through thick an' thin to prove me affection for you, sufferin' mesel' to be dressed up till there isn't a kangaroo in Austhralia but'd be ashamed o' me for company, an' this is the thratement I recave. Moira Moynahan, you're loike the rest o' yer sex, a purty decavin' female that has no mortal aim in life but to desthroy the hopes an' the hearts o' the innocent, unsuspectin' male ginder. Come, Shaun," looking ruefully at the dog, "we'll take lave o' a place where there's no welcome for us."

Moira sprung after the animal, throwing herself on her knees beside it, and clasping her arms around its neck.

"Tell him, Shaun, that I can't speak to him; I'm forbidden by uncle to receive any attentions from him because uncle says he drinks, and he wouldn't make me a good husband; but oh, tell him, Shaun, that I love him just the same."

"Whew!" prolonged and shrill, came from Tighe's lips, an ejaculation by which he intended to express how clearly he now understood the matter. Then he called the dog to him, and throwing himself beside it in precisely the same manner as Moira had done, he said:

"An' tell *her*, Shaun, that me love for her'll niver die—it's burnin'ly on the increase ivery minute; tell her how I've her kapesake yet,"—releasing his grasp of the dog for a moment to take his *caubeen* from the chair on which it rested, and to point triumphantly to the now somewhat ragged, as well as faded, bow at the side. "Tell her,"—putting the hat down, and resuming his embrace of Shaun,—"that I manfully resisted ivery attempt to put another *caubeen* on me head, an'

tell her I'll continue to resist till her own fair fingers will give me a betther remimbrance. Tell her all that, Shaun, an' tell her that while there's life there's hopes, an' that Father Meagher'll be brought round yet."

He turned the dog about so that it faced Moira, and the latter calling him, he walked leisurely to her, his head down, and his tail between his legs, as if his canine dignity was suffering from the undignified task which he was compelled to perform.

"Tell him, Shaun," answered Moira, squeezing the dog very tight, "that we were expecting and expecting him to come with news of Mr. O'Donoghue, and that when he didn't come, and Father Meagher found out they had taken Mr. O'Donoghue to prison, the young ladies got wild with grief; they would see him somehow, or failing that, they'd comfort themselves by looking at his prison ; so this very morning Miss McCarthy and Miss O'Donoghue started with uncle for Tralee."

Tighe jumped erect, forgetting in his surprise at the news that it was to Shaun he must speak ; he addressed himself directly to Moira.

"Thin I must be off instantly, an' thry to overtake thim, it's little use I'm afeerd their journey will be—the masther is too sthrictly guarded. I've been all this toime thryin' to make me way to him, an' I haven't laid eyes on him yet. I have only been able to foind out whereabouts in the jail he is ; but, plaze goodness ——" he was approaching Moira and talking eagerly to her, while she bowed her face on the dog, and spoke from the depths of his hairy neck :

"Oh, Shaun, why don't he speak to you, and not be trying to lead me into temptation this way? he knows I mustn't say a word to him."

Tighe stopped short, impatient and annoyed.

"It's aisy seein' yer uncle was niver in love, Moira, or he'd not be subjectin' us to sich cruelty as this." He whistled to Shaun. "Tell her, Shaun, that I have a docymint here that

ould Morty Carther intinded to bethray the masther wid, as well as iver so many more o' the boys, an' as she has the book larnin', she'll read it for you, Shaun, an' I'll listen."

He put the paper in the dog's mouth, and signaled him to take it to Moira. Encircling the animal with her arm, she held the paper before him, and read with little difficulty all the criminating evidence which it contained, her cheek flushing and her bosom swelling, as she realized the dreadful consequences which possession of that paper by the English government would bring to the devoted fellows whose names it contained.

"Tatther an' ages, but that'd be a clincher for the ould scoundrel, Morty Carther!" ejaculated Tighe.

The interview was ended at last by mutual protestations of undying love, all told to the dog, and by embraces of the latter, from which the puzzled animal, who had never before been the object of such ardent attention, was evidently glad to be free. Out on the road, he recovered his spirits, frisking by Tighe's side, and barking with delight at the very birds which soared far above him.

"Whisht! for an unmannerly dog!" rebuked Tighe; "it's heavy-hearted you ought to be, an' not carryin' on in that loight fashion, whin the masther's shut up widin four bare walls an' debarred from a soight o' thim he loves!"

But Shaun seemed to know that the reprimand was given more as a vent to Tighe's own troubled feelings than as a positive injunction which must be obeyed, and he continued his sportive movements till an obliging carman gave his master and himself a lengthy lift to Tralee.

Tighe's first anxiety was to find his friends who had started that morning from Dhrommacohol. He judged that they would sojourn at some hotel in the town, and to one of the best of these he hastened. The bar was surrounded by a group of idlers, amid the latter a good sprinkling of redcoats. All seemed to be on fraternal terms, from the well-to-do farmer, flush with the success of a recent sale, hobnobbing

over a social glass with a roystering townsman, to the reduced Irish gentleman holding animated parley with one of the officers. Tighe assumed his leisurely, half-fool's manner; too wary to make open inquiry for recent arrivals, he hoped to gain his information by his usual shrewdness. A group composed of sporting men and officers were discussing some subject of the turf with loud animation. Suddenly one of the latter said:

"I tell you, Garfield is in sorry plight."

The name made Tighe pause in his apparently aimless saunter.

"He shouldn't have been so d——d quick," was the response from one of the sporting men. "He wouldn't listen to a friend's hint, or he might have been saved his money and his honor."

"Well, he hasn't lost them yet," said the first speaker.

"No; but they are as good as lost; the horse that he bet on has become disabled, and the rider that he engaged has been bought up by the other side."

"But he can enter new stakes."

"Too late; there isn't a horse in the county fit to use beside those already in the lists, and as for a rider, where would he look for one now?"

"How much has he bet?"

"A hundred or so, himself; but many of his friends are on his book."

"Steep for Garfield!"

"Yes; he wouldn't have entered so strongly but that that handsome widow's brother was to the fore, and I fancy Garfield wanted to display a little."

"What! the Widow Moore's sporting brother, Jack?"

"Yes; the same; and a scape-grace he is."

"Never a better; and he is going to ride Jim Lane's brown mare; as they were made, they were matched, for a greater pair of heltering, skeltering vagabonds never existed than himself and the divil of a mare."

"And was it against him that Garfield bet?"

"Yes; it has got abroad some way that this poor fool of a quartermaster is dead in love with the dashing widow, though she only spoke to him once, and that just at their introduction; and though by reason of having so many richer beaux she has been giving him freezing looks and the like, it doesn't seem to have had any effect on the poor fellow. He's been haunting her like a shadow; intruding himself everywhere that he could do so without gross impropriety. Her brother, Jack, always ready for sport, whether fair, or foul, got an inkling of all this, and also how the Englishman was one of a class who think an Irish girl's affections are to be had for the asking, and at the meeting for the course the other day—when the stakes were entered, and the horses named—just for sport, and to show the soldiers a trifle of Irish smartness, when Rody Crane's filly was put up Jack, who had already got the ear of Garfield in view of this very thing, suggested that he, Garfield, should enter the filly, and that he, Jack, would furnish the best rider in all the county. Garfield accepted, though one of his friends tried to whisper him into refusing, and immediately the pools were made. Garfield bet as I told you, to find himself in a day or two a sadly-duped man. The rider, Joe Canty, who is really the best jockey in the county, was bought up by the other side, just as deceiving Jack Moore knew he would be, and Rody Crane's filly was discovered to have taken the spavin. The bet is in such a way that if Garfield cannot enter another horse he and his friends will lose their money,—a loss which I believe his purse is ill able to sustain at the present moment—and he will be laughed at by Jack Moore and all that roystering set; and I fancy that it is the anticipation of the latter which chafes him the most."

Tighe had heard sufficient. It would give him abundant thought for his next interval of leisure, and he had a dim idea that he should be able to turn it all to some important advantage. He moved on to the bar, determining to hazard an inquiry which should elicit some information of his friends.

His garb, proclaiming him to be the servant of a military officer, was rather a passport, procuring at least not uncivil attention from those with whom he came in contact. But the buxom girl at the bar, though she answered blandly enough all Tighe's apparently careless questions, imparted no satisfactory information, and Tighe departed, to venture on the same enterprise in the other hotels of the town. His efforts were as little successful, and puzzled, and provoked with himself, attributing his failure to his own "want of gumption," a phrase by which he expressed his deficiency in understanding, he was obliged at last to turn his steps to his master's quarters.

"Just in time," said Captain Dennier, stumbling upon Tighe in front of the barracks, and speaking with a kindlier tone than the latter felt he had any right to expect, having overstayed his limited leave of absence. "I have been in search of some one to take this note for me," drawing an embossed, neatly-directed envelope from his pocket; "run down with it now to Blenner's and give it to the Reverend Mr. Meagher, and wait for an answer."

Tighe's whole face underwent so sudden and marked a change, intense pleasure showing in every lineament, that if he had not pretended to be very busy placing the note safely away, the officer must have remarked him. He knew the Reverend Mr. Meagher meant none other than Father Meagher, and Blenner's was one of the very hotels which had figured in his own fruitless search. It required but little time to reach again the bar, Shaun accompanying him, at which he had so recently stood, and it was with a very important air, arising from the consciousness of the legitimacy of his errand, that he delivered himself this time of no covert question, but an open inquiry for the worthy priest. His question being accompanied by the remark that he bore a note from Captain Dennier, of her Majesty's —— Regiment, won for him immediate and respectful attention. He was shown to the parlor to wait for the reverend gentleman, while Shaun

to his own disappointment and that of his master, was detained below.

Father Meagher was not prepared to meet Tighe a Vohr, and still less prepared to see him in his present dress. His start of astonishment, and then his look of comical bewilderment as his eyes wandered from Tighe's curly brown head down to his topped boots, and slowly back again, made Tighe smile, though he affected to hang his head in some confusion.

"What is the meaning of this?" said the clergyman at last, recovering from his surprise, and advancing to his visitor.

"Jist this, yer riverince,"—and Tighe, bowing, handed him Captain Dennier's note.

The priest's face lit with a smile of satisfaction as he read, and he exclaimed when he had finished:

"Ah! he will see me, and he desires me to appoint the hour of my coming. He is truly the gentleman."

He turned to Tighe: "Pray tell me how you have come to be Captain Dennier's messenger."

Tighe made sundry maneuvers before he answered; walking the whole round of the room—which contained only the priest and himself—to be sure that there were no eavesdroppers, placing his hand over his mouth to shut in the sound of his voice, and rolling his eyes about, to be certain that no one could enter unperceived. Then he whispered to the clergyman a brief account of the events which had brought him to his present position.

"And you have in your possession now the paper containing information that Mortimer Carter gave to Captain Dennier?" said the astonished and delighted priest.

"I have, yer riverince, an' glad enough I am to surrinder it into yer kapin',—" drawing forth the document. "Sure I got lave o' absence, as the soldiers say, an' I wint all the way to Dhrommacohol to give it to you, an' to tell the result o' all me thrials to see the masther. You wor from home, an' Moira wouldn't spake to me."

"Wouldn't speak to you!"—uttered in a tone of hearty surprise. "Why not?"

"I think yer riverince knows the rayson—the ordher kem from yersel'." And Tighe looked down in well-affected shyness.

The priest seemed puzzled for an instant; then it flashed upon him—the injunction he had given his niece regarding Tighe a Vohr; but he had not intended to impose such an absolute silence as Tighe reported. He was pleased, however, with her obedience, and disposed on that account, as well as on account of Tighe's own faithful efforts in behalf of the prisoner, to treat him with more than usual favor.

He shook Tighe a Vohr's hand: "You have done an inestimable service to our poor boy, as well as to the other poor fellows; none of us shall forget it for you; and now the young ladies must see you, and hear this; it will gladden their sad hearts. I shall ring for them."

He did so, and they came in arm in arm, both paler than they had ever looked to Tighe before, and both showing in every lineament of their fair faces such painful evidence of a wearing grief that it almost broke the faithful fellow's heart to see it. They brightened when they saw him; somehow his very presence inspired hope, and though like the priest they were surprised at his garb, their greeting was none the less warm and delighted. Again and again they wrung his hands, asking eagerly a dozen questions, and looking as if they could cry for very joy when they heard of his success in obtaining the paper. How long the scene, with its pleasant and painful circumstances, might have continued not one of the little party could tell, but it was interrupted by the entrance of some of the guests of the hotel.

The clergyman said in a low tone: "I was advised by a friend to see Captain Dennier when we came up here, and told that the captain was a perfect gentleman and, moreover, was the intimate friend of the governor of the jail; as such, should he be disposed, he could aid us to an interview with Carroll. Accordingly, I sought the officer on our arrival this morning, but he was not in the barracks at the time, and I

left a note for him, stating that I had called on important business and would like to see him ; he answers like the gentleman that he is reported to be, in a very courteous strain, placing himself at my service, and desiring to know when I can repeat my visit."

Tighe shook his head ominously : "I'm afeerd it'll be very hard to see the young masther ; from all I can larn on ivery side he's under wonderful sthrict guard, an' not one at all that's suspected o' frindly intintions'll be allowed nixt or near him ; they say that order kem from the highest quarthers. But "—and Tighe lowered his voice still more, and directed an earnest glance to Nora, whose attention was so eager that she was listening with parted lips and bated breath —"the captain *is* a bosom frind o' the governor o' the jail, an' it would be aisy enough for him to spake in yer favor, an' get the intherview that way."

The priest's face brightened. "Well," he replied, "I shall answer Captain Dennier's note immediately, and perhaps something hopeful will come of my seeing him."

He turned to leave the parlor ; Tighe and Nora began a low, earnest conversation, but Clare followed him. "Father,"—stopping him in the corridor—"state in your answer that you will be accompanied by Nora and myself."

The clergyman stared aghast.

"I mean it, father ; my heart misgives me since Tighe spoke of Carroll's strict guard, and should it be in Captain Dennier's power to procure for us an interview with my brother, his fine sense of honor "—there was a dash of sarcasm in her voice—"might make him refuse ; but perhaps when Nora and myself unite in petitioning him, perhaps, when he sees us both so deeply sunk in grief, even he, high principled as he is,—" again the sarcasm which she could not control was in her voice— "may not think it dishonorable to afford some consolation to two breaking hearts."

The tender-hearted priest, surprised and pained at her proposition, and embarrassed also at the thought of bringing

ladies within the precincts of the barracks, yet could not find it in his heart to refuse her; he turned away, his silence yielding the assent she craved.

In a few minutes Tighe had the answer, and having called for Shaun, whose frequent bark had attested his impatience for his master's return, he was hastening back to the soldiers' quarters.

CHAPTER XVIII.

CARTER'S INSINUATIONS.

CAPTAIN DENNIER flushed until the scarlet was visible on his forehead when he read the reply brought by his valet, and yet, despite the repugnance which he strove to feel toward the proposed interview, and his anxiety lest this unusual visit of ladies to his quarters would provoke unpleasant comment, he felt a throb of pleasure. Clare O'Donoghue's bright face rose before him, as it often did since his first look at her winsome features; the remembrance of her candor, her enthusiastic spirit, thrilled him as they had done on the occasion of their first meeting; and he felt tempted to curse the fate which had not made him Irish, and an Irish patriot. With nervous impatience he awaited their arrival, ordering that they should be shown at once to a room in a retired part of the barracks, the only one whose appearance indicated less military precision than the other apartments. He suspected that their visit was to obtain from him information of the prisoner, but he did not dream that the interview before its close was to be marked by a harrowing scene.

The visit to the barracks of the clergyman and two ladies deeply veiled, but showing in their plain tasteful dress and their deportment an elegance of breeding and a captivating modesty, and that visit paid to the reserved and stern Captain Dennier, was the subject of wondering comment among the soldiers. Some of them waylaid Tighe to know the import of the visit; but Tighe had his answer: "We Hirish," he said, imitating the cockney accent of the soldier who questioned him, "haven't the curiosity o' you Hinglish to know the business o' our betthers; how do I know the company that th

captain's recavin' at the prisint moment? you'd betther ask himsel' for information."

Captain Dennier met his visitors with the most graceful and courteous of greetings; just a trifle of embarrassment appeared in his heightened color, as Clare O'Donoghue threw aside her veil, and bent upon him one of her bright piercing looks.

Father Meagher came at once to the object of the visit —would Captain Dennier kindly aid them to an interview with the prisoner? The officer started; in all that he had surmised no suspicion of such a favor being craved crossed his mind. Being the friend and confidant as he was of the governor of the jail, a scratch of his pen to that official requesting permission for a visit of friends to the Fenian prisoner would have been sufficient to secure an instant consent: but such a proceeding would be an utter violation of that principle of duty which the young officer held to be dearer than life. His silence, his painful embarrassment, spoke too well the refusal that for the moment he was unable to utter.

"Captain Dennier, could you, if you would," asked Clare's trembling voice, "help us to obtain this favor?"

"I could," he responded, without looking at her.

"Then may I beg,"—before he could realize or prevent what she was about to do, she had thrown herself on her knees before him, and burst into so passionate and piteous an appeal to be afforded one sight of her brother that the officer was well-nigh maddened by the conflict which compassion for her touching distress, and his own iron determination to do his duty at whatever cost, aroused within him. "The prayers and the blessings of two orphan girls will follow you!" she continued, with her clasped hands raised toward him, and her lovely eyes streaming with the tears she could no longer restrain. Her action had been so sudden and so unexpected that neither Father Meagher nor Nora had been prepared for it, and now both stood as if paralyzed by the shock of her

proceeding. "Help me, Nora," she still continued, "plead with me to this man, whose heart is so hard to touch."

"Rise, I beg you, Miss O'Donoghue," the officer at last found voice to say, and he bent to assist her; by this time also, Father Meagher was soliciting her with his tender entreaty, and Nora was supporting her with her trembling clasp.

"Say that you will help us to one brief interview with him."

The captain was desperate; how he wished that he had resigned his commission as he had intended to do on the occasion of his last interview with Lord Heathcote,—he would not then be in this wretched strait. With an effort which sent the hot blood surging madly into his face and then caused it to recede as suddenly, leaving him white to the lips, he said in a voice that trembled painfully, despite all his efforts to make it calm:

"I am harrowed to the soul, Miss O'Donoghue; I would give my life to be able to answer as you desire me to do, but my duty, my honor, my principles forbid it. I will give you what information of your brother it is in my power to give,—the probable time and whereabouts of his trial—but to assist you to an interview with him is impossible—I must refuse to interfere." He turned sadly away.

Clare would have made another effort, but Father Meagher detained her. "Control yourself, my dear child," he whispered; "we cannot move him; and nothing remains but to obtain the information of which he speaks."

He left her and sought the captain, who stood at a little distance from the party, his head bowed, and his eyes moodily seeking the floor.

"I thank you, sir," the priest began gently, "for your evident commiseration of that poor girl, and I regret that we have put your devotion to duty to such a painful test; but perchance the information of which you speak may be some balm to our suffering and anxious hearts."

The young man, in gratitude for words which seemed to say that at least one understood him, and had divined the un-

happy conflict waging within him, extended his hand to the clergyman, and with an admirable air of candor answered: "I thank you from my soul, reverend sir, for what you have said; you have taken some of the bitterness out of that cup which it is my fate constantly to drink, and you give me hope that in a more peaceful time I may be better understood and better judged by one who now regards me as the most stern-hearted of my sex. With regard to the information you ask, I can say this much: it is more than probable that Mr. O'Donoghue will be detained here a month, at the end of which time, if he is not sent on to Dublin, his trial will take place here."

Father Meagher bowed and thanked him, and returned to his fair charges, both of whom were once more heavily veiled. Captain Dennier accompanied them to the limits of the officers' quarters. With a wild wish for some sign which might tell him that Clare's feelings toward him were not entirely those of aversion, he ventured to walk beside her as they neared the arched passage in which he would make his adieus; but she did not give him the slightest mark of notice. Disappointed and saddened, he still found opportunity to whisper when he had taken leave of Father Meagher and Nora: "The day may come—and I shall pray for its dawn—in which I shall be able to show you how bitterly, how cruelly you wrong me." Could he have penetrated the thickness of her veil, nay, more, could he for one instant have read the depths of her heart, he would have been entirely comforted, for the latter was strangely touched—touched far more than its owner would admit to herself, and she thanked the friendly screen which concealed the sudden rush of tell-tale color to her face.

Tighe a Vohr, with his wonted shrewdness, was in timely waiting, and to him Captain Dennier resigned his visitors for further guidance from the barracks.

"Is it succiss?" whispered the eager fellow, when he could ask the question without fear of being overheard.

"No, Tighe," answered Father Meagher, "it is not; we

have gained nothing by our visit but the information that Carroll is to be kept here a month, and perhaps will stand his trial here."

"A month!" repeated Tighe, "be the powers!—axin' yer riverince's pardon for swearin'—but mebbe I could fix the matther. Howld awhile, an' let me conjecther—faith! I think I have it. Go back to Dhrommacohol, but kape yersel's in readiness to return any minute."

"What is it, Tighe; what have you planned?" asked the ladies in a breath.

"Don't ax me to tell, fer I haven't it quite sthraight in me own moind yet, an' mebbe I won't be succissful."

"You are plotting nothing wrong, I hope—no sinful means, Tighe?" said the priest a little anxiously, well knowing that Tighe a Vohr's affection for his young master would impel him almost to any commission for that master's benefit.

"Now, Father Meagher, can't you thrust me sometoime, an' not always be thinkin' I'm a rascal?"

He spoke with so ludicrous an air of injured innocence that, despite their heavy hearts, they were forced to smile.

Having accompanied the little party as far as his instructions warranted, Tighe took a respectful leave, and with a very thoughtful, important air turned his steps to the part of the barracks where he hoped to meet Garfield. He had rather avoided the quartermaster since the latter's refusal to allow him to indite another love-letter, and it was with no little anxiety that he determined on a meeting now. He knew not how far his deception relative to the letters might have been discovered, in case it had been discovered at all, but he resolved to trust to his natural wit should he find himself in difficulty. He came suddenly upon the quartermaster, who was standing apparently watching a group of soldiers engaged in card-playing; but his heavy face betrayed by its expression that his thoughts were not those engendered by the scene before him. His knitted brow, giving evidence of unpleasant reflections and his thick-set underlip, gave a dogged and repulsive look to features otherwise not ill-formed.

"Could I hev a private word wid yer honor?" Tighe whispered to him.

The quartermaster scowled for a moment, but reading in the expressive sparkle of Tighe a Vohr's eyes that something of importance lay behind the request, he led the way to his own apartment. Tighe affected great secrecy, whispering with both hands to his mouth, and the latter very close to Garfield's ear:

"I undherstand that yer honor's in throuble be rayson o' the bet you med on Rody Crane's filly the other day."

The quartermaster seemed to be astonished.

"You see, yer honor, I heerd all about it to-day, an' I sez to mesel': it's a burnin' shame to let a rale nice spoken gintleman loike Mr. Garfield be put down an' taken clane in be such a set o' rogues as Jack Moore an' the b'ys that's wid him. So I think I can foind a way to help yer honor. If yer had another horse to inter, an' a rider for him, would it make it all right?"

"It would; but where is another horse to be had? I've scoured the county for one, but it's no use; and the rider—that is as difficult to find in this cursed county."

Tighe gave a knowing and expressive wink. "Lave it to me, Mr. Garfield, for purvidin' you wid a horse, an' a rider, too, an' the divil a betther animal in the county than the one I'll get unless I'm onsuccissful intoirely. Didn't I make good me word afore—didn't I tell you I'd write a letther for you as'd bring you an answer—an' didn't I do it—I ax yer honor, didn't I do it?"

"Yes; so far as bringing me an answer was concerned; but that is all that has come of it. The widow continues the silence and the coldness which in her letter she besought me to maintain. Really, if it was not her express wish, I should demand at once if my letter had offended her."

"Do not," said Tighe, in frantic earnestness, his very soul in terror for the possible consequences to himself of such a proceeding. "I'll tell you a bit o' a saycret: she has a scape-

grace o' a brother, Jack Moore, as wild a divil as iver led in a steeplechase or danced in a fair, an' wid all his wild ways she jist thinks the loike o' him niver was seen, an' she's afeerd to displase him in one mortal thing; well, for some rayson or other, he doesn't loike you, an he'd be death on his sister if he thought she'd as much as give you one sweet look. Now I have good cause to know that the same lady does loike you, an' she loikes you betther for the way you're actin' at the prisent toime, makin' yersel' agreeable to her wishes. Do you see now; do you comprehind intoirely all I'm sayin' to you?" asked Tighe with much the same manner and voice he might have used to Shaun.

The dazed Englishman nodded; he was too mystified to know whether he ought to be pleased, or angry, or puzzled, or all three together.

"Well, thin, this same Jack Moore wouldn't care if he desthroyed you this noight, the villain, an' it's a laughin' stock he wants to make o' you, as well as to win yer money; but if you'll abide be me directions, I think we'll defate him, the thafe o' the world. Tell me now, will you do jist as I say?"

The mystified Englishman again nodded.

"Well, promise me that you won't be obthrudin' yersel' on the widdy's notice, that you won't go nixt nor nigh where she is till the race is over. Will you promise that?"

A third time the bewildered Englishman nodded.

Tighe gave a grunt of satisfaction. "Now tell me how many days afore the lists will be closed; I mane whin would it be too late for you to inter the name o' a horse in the place o' Rody Crane's filly?"

"The day after to-morrow," replied the soldier, at last seeming to arouse to a correct understanding of the case.

"That's short toime," said Tighe, "but how and iver we'll thry. And now,"—changing his voice from its tone of authority to one of humble entreaty—"mebbe yer honor wouldn't refuse me a bit o' a favor. I'll not ax it till afther I've secured the horse an' the rider."

"What is it, Mr. Carmody?" asked the quartermaster.

"It's to get a pass for me, some way, that'll admit three people into the jail to see that poor prisoner that was brought up here from Dhrommacohol the other noight. They're frinds o' his, an' two o' thim the purtiest ladies you iver laid eyes on,—me heart ached intoirely whin I seen the grief they wor in bekaise they wouldn't be let to see him. Now, Mr. Garfield, I'll put it to yersel': if it was yer own case an' the Widdy Moore was breakin' her heart to see you, wouldn't you be thankful, yer honor, wouldn't the sintimints o' yer heart rise in gratitude to the one that would bring her to visit you in yer lonely cell?"

That appeal *did* touch a tender spot in the quartermaster's bosom; imagination pictured the fair Mistress Moore paying him such a visit, and for the bliss of that he would have been willing to endure the dreariest confinement. He was evidently softened, and he answered kindly:

"Perhaps I can manage it. One of the officials of the prison is a warm friend of mine, and if the visit be made at night, and be kept quite secret, I think it can be arranged. But the visit *must* be made at night, and be kept entirely secret."

"Any *perdition* at all'll be agreed to," said Tighe, meaning condition, and gleaning from the soldier's stare that he had made an error of speech; but without attempting to correct it he continued: "An' now I'll be takin' me lave, Mr. Garfield, but you'll see me to-morrow noight, an' mebbe afore, an' I thrust it's good news I'll be bringin' you."

And before Mr. Garfield could collect his wits sufficiently to ask the numerous questions which rushed to his now thoroughly awakened mind, Tighe had disappeared.

CHAPTER XIX.

DISAPPOINTED.

BACK to Dhrommacohol! nothing else was left for the three sorrowful hearts that had come up to Tralee that morning, hoping, trusting, praying. Their hope had been disappointed, their trust had proved vain, their prayer had been unanswered. Father Meagher, for sake of his despondent charges, assumed a cheerfulness it was impossible for him to feel, and he spoke in re-assuring terms of what Tighe might be able to achieve. But all had little effect. The silence and the pallor of his companions told too surely that there was little decrease in their doubts and their apprehensions.

As they turned the corner of a street on their way to the station they were met by Morty Carter. The surprise and the repugnance to the meeting were mutual, and Carter drew back, this time with no feigned emotion, but with a start of embarrassed and painful astonishment. Father Meagher, his first impulse of bitter indignation toward the traitor passed, followed the example of his divine Master, and presented a not unfriendly mien to the miscreant. But there was a sternness in the priest's eye and an accent in his voice which spoke volumes to Carter, and made him wince despite all the bravado he in a moment assumed.

"I am glad to see your reverence," he said, bowing with a fulsome air, "and the young ladies;—" the latter, though so deeply veiled that not a feature could be discerned, had averted their faces—"I came here to try to gain admission to the jail, to see Mr. Carroll, but I have been sternly refused."

Father Meagher could control himself no longer. "Morty Carter," said he, looking with withering contempt at the

wretch before him, "are you plotting more treachery; have you not betrayed our poor boy sufficiently that you would *see* him to cement your infamy?"

Carter strove to return the steady look of the priest, but his eyes fell; he tried to assume the defiant air which had borne him through on previous occasions, but somehow the sight of those veiled figures, and one especially, the taller of the two, unnerved him; it was with a crestfallen air he answered:

"Your reverence is prejudiced against me, so it would be little good to speak in my own favor; but one day, perhaps, when these black reports about me are proved——"

"To be entirely true, Carter," interrupted Father Meagher, "you will appear as you are, and we shall know what a viper we have nourished. Good day."

He turned shortly, his companions following him, and Mortimer Carter was left to his own dark and vengeful thoughts.

The dim little chapel with its silence and solitude formed Nora's consolation and rest, and to it she hastened when, after weary hours of dusty travel, the little party had arrived at home and she could steal away unnoticed. The hour was late, and Clare, unusually fatigued in body and mind, went immediately to her room. Father Meagher sought his niece. She was putting the last touches to her kitchen work, and the cleanly-swept floor, the old-fashioned dresser just under the light where its array of burnished tins and polished ware were brought into resplendent view, with Moira herself, fresh and winsome as a spring blossom, formed a picture exceedingly pretty. The clergyman was the more disposed to think it fair, and to be much pleased with his niece, because of her obedience regarding Tighe a Vohr. With a pleasant compliment on the neat appearance of the room, a remark so unusual from him that Moira started, he called her to him.

She obeyed, blushing and delighted.

"I understand that Tim Carmody has been here," said the priest.

"He has been," she answered, half falteringly, and with her air of delight changing to one of some anxiety and fear.

"Oh, you need not be afraid," spoke the clergyman quickly, in order to re-assure her. "I have found out all about it from Tighe himself,—we met him in Tralee—and I was much pleased to hear of your obedience; you absolutely refused to speak to him, I believe."

She immediately regained her confidence and her vivacity. "I did, uncle; I would not say one word to him, because you forbade me to."

"So he told me; but I did not mean, my dear child, to enjoin absolute silence upon you; I desired you not to receive his attentions, not to permit him to become your suitor, but I had no intention of wishing you not to speak to him—that would be uncivil and uncharitable. But God will bless you for the strict obedience you thought it your duty to practice. And now I am happy to say that the poor fellow has done us good service; he has lost neither time nor thought in serving poor Carroll."

In her delight at her uncle's unwonted praise of Tighe a Vohr, Moira quite forgot her caution; she burst out eagerly:

"And did he tell you, uncle, about that dreadful paper with Mr. O'Donoghue's name on it? he gave it to me to read, and——"

"*Gave it to you to read!*" interrupted the priest, who had supposed that her absolute silence which Tighe reported meant also an utter absence of even usual civility on her part, an idea which now seemed to be disproved by the fact of her acceptance of the paper from Tighe in order to read it. "And you read it," continued the priest, "and still no communication passed between you and Tighe? I cannot understand this."

Moira was scarlet; she hung her head in shame and confusion.

"Answer me, Moira," said the clergyman sternly, "have both you and Tighe been telling me wilful lies?"

There was no other course for the shame-stricken girl but to tell the truth, and the whole truth.

"We spoke to Shaun, uncle, Tighe and I, sending him from one to the other of us with our messages."

Father Meagher looked for an instant as if he had become suddenly dazed; then the whole affair flashing upon him as vividly as though he had been present at the interview in which Shaun played so important a part, it was with difficulty he could repress a smile at the ingenuity which would thus deceive him; but he was really annoyed that such cunning had been practiced, and he determined on the morrow to give his niece a more stern reprimand than she had ever received from him.

"A precious pair both you and Tighe are!" he muttered, abruptly leaving the kitchen.

"Now I've done it, like a real *omadhaun* as I am!" muttered Moira, and with a heavy heart she repaired to her chamber.

Nora had finished her prayers and her long meditation, and leaving the chapel by the passage which led to the garden surrounding the house, she was tempted by the beauty of the night to prolong her stay. Standing by a broken gap, the stones of which had only that day fallen, she heard a deep-drawn sigh, as if it proceeded from some one crouched among the stones. Alarmed, and yet yielding to the impulse which prompted her to see if it was a case that her charity could benefit, she stooped a little, and asked softly:

"Is there any one here in trouble?"

A figure rose slowly, noisily displacing the stones about it as it did so, and then, mounting on the lowest part of the broken gap, stood fully revealed by the moonlight to Nora. It was a man of medium height, with shoulders so high as to give him somewhat of a deformed appearance; his head, deeply sunken between his shoulders, was abundantly covered

by coarse black hair that, hanging matted almost over his very eyes, gave to the haggard face a half-wild and savage look.

"Rick of the Hills!" exclaimed Nora.

"Yes; Rick of the Hills, and no less," responded the man doggedly.

"What is the matter?" asked Nora, kindly; "you have been seen about here so little of late that we hoped you had found some comfortable home at last."

"Comfortable home—*me* in a comfortable home!" he laughed in painful mockery of the words. "There will never be comfort for me; neither here, nor hereafter; the devil is now waiting to seize my soul."

"Hush!" said Nora, battling against a sensation of faintness which crept for a moment upon her, "do not say such dreadful words. He who made you is all-powerful to save you."

"Yes; but not when a soul is black with guilt like mine is. You asked a minute ago if there was any one here in trouble; I am in trouble—my heart is breaking within me!"

The expression of anguish which came into his pinched features attested the truth of his words. The gentle girl was painfully touched.

"What is it, Rick? perhaps I can help you; tell me your sorrow, that I may at least try to relieve it."

He shook his head.

"You could not; not all the kindness of your pure young heart could lighten the load on my mind. But may be you could tell me something that might stifle the pain of my conscience. If a father lost his child,—a little one that was like the apple of his eye; a little one that he loved till his heart didn't seem to beat when she was out of his sight—if he lost her, I mean if she was taken from him to a good, rich home to be the darling of everybody there, and to be made to think that her father was dead, and if that father was content to give her up—content because of the riches, and the comfort, and the education which would be given his darling,—I say if

he was content to do all this, and to wander the world without her, begging his bit, but always crying for her in his heart; at the last, when he could stand it no longer, when the grief in his bosom was hurrying him to the grave, would it be right for him to claim his child?"

The homely, but touching, pathos of the voice, the wild grief in the face looking down upon her, drew forth Nora McCarthy's most compassionate tears; they flowed fast and copiously.

"It would be right," she answered.

"Right for him to intrude himself," he resumed, "into that grand home, beggar and outcast as he is; right for him to spoil his child's happiness by the shock which it would give her to learn that she has such a father?"

"Yes," replied Nora; "and when she learns of his faithful and tender affection for her through all the years, surely her heart will bound to him—let him be what he may, a villain, a murderer, he will be still her father, and, so far as regards herself, her loving father."

"And do you think, then,"—the voice grew more mournfully earnest, the eyes more piercing in their look—"that it would be the duty of that child to leave that elegant home and go with her begging father?"

"I do, I do!" answered Nora; "and it should be her loving task to labor for him and to comfort him."

"Thank you, Miss McCarthy; those are the sweetest words I have heard for many a day; if I wasn't the sinful creature I am, I'd bid God to bless you, but such words from me would only be a mockery."

He turned to leave the gap.

"A moment, Rick," besought Nora. "I would say another word to you. I feel that this case which you have so touchingly described is your own, and I fancy that I can understand now your unhappy life—the wandering habits we have so censured, your intemperance, your distaste for labor, —all have been due to this harrowing grief. I pity you, my

poor fellow, but a brighter day is coming : you will claim this long-lost, ardently-loved child ; she will bound to your arms, and with her you will be once more happy. Yes, Rick ; and in that happiness you will thank God, and you will return to Him ; you will atone for the past, you will make reparation to the sacred Heart you have so wounded. Promise me, Rick, that when that day comes you will return to the God you have so long forsaken—you will frequent the Sacraments once more."

He had clasped his hands over his face, and she saw by the violent trembling of his form, and the tears which trickled between his fingers, the grief that he could not repress.

"You know not what you ask, Miss McCarthy," he said at last, looking at her.

"I do, Rick, I do, and I want your promise,"—stepping lightly on the loose stones so that she could be nearer to him, while at the same time she extended her hand.

"Not my hand to lie in your innocent palm," he replied, "I'll promise without that."

He turned quickly, jumped into the road below, and walked rapidly away.

Nora went to her couch with strange thoughts ; amid her own grief and anxiety she had sympathy to spare for the poor wretch with whom she had so recently parted, and for whom before she slept she offered many an earnest and fervent prayer.

CHAPTER XX.

A STREET ARAB.

It was only a street accident: the overturning of a gig driven tandem, and the dashing away of the frightened horses with the broken vehicle. The owner of the turn-out had singularly escaped, owing to his presence of mind and his swiftness in jumping; but a little street Arab had fallen under the feet of the horses, and he seemed to be severely hurt.

Tighe a Vohr, passing at the time, had witnessed the whole of the accident, and he was the first to lift the little prostrate form. The boy was not insensible, but the wound in his head, from which the blood was flowing profusely, and the death-like color of his face, bespoke no light injury.

"I have no home, but don't let them take me to the hospital," he whispered, striving to smile at the friendly face above him; and Tighe, touched to the heart by the gentle, mournful look in the soft, dark eyes, and the pleading in the faint voice, was puzzled how to grant the boy's request. He was not long, however, in having one of his sudden, bright thoughts. Corny O'Toole's bachelor apartment was in the next street—a few seconds' walk would bring him there; and, without pausing to think what Corny's opinion on the subject might be, or what kind of a welcome the latter might accord the injured stranger, he resolved to bear his burden thence, trusting to his ingenuity for mollifying the old man's temper should it be unpleasantly aroused.

"Back," he cried to the crowd now pressing about him, "lave the way!"—speaking angrily to some of the foremost, who with impertinent curiosity were thrusting themselves in his face. His sturdy demeanor showed that he would en-

force his order, and the crowd made a passage for him, dropping sundry remarks as he went.

"The craythur! it must be his brother; an' a purty *gossoon* he is! The Lord betune us an' harrum, but it's little we know from one day to another what'll overtake us."

Tighe, paying little attention to the observations, hurried on with his burden, Shaun closely following him. Mr. O'Toole had the same lock, and bolt, and spike to attend to when Tighe knocked at his door, as on the occasion of the latter's previous visit; but Tighe's voice pleading for speedy admission seemed to hasten the little man's movements.

"I'm afeerd he's killed, Corny—the beautiful little lad!" began Tighe, the moment the door was fairly opened, and he brushed by the astounded Mr. O'Toole to the bed which stood in a curtained corner of the room. Placing his burden gently upon it, he continued: "There was no other place to take him, Corny, an' I moinded how me mother used to tell o' yer tinder heart for the poor an' the disthressed, so I med up me moind to bring him here, an' we'll nurse him, Corny, you an' me, till he gets well."

That allusion to Mrs. Carmody struck home, as the sly Tighe a Vohr knew it would do. Mr. O'Toole was by the bedside in a moment.

"Get me some wather," said Tighe, "an' we'll wash this cut the first thing—see how deep it is; an' mebbe we could get him well agin widout havin' recoorse to a docthor; for docthors, bad luck to thim! are only a dissectin' set that'll take yer money while you're livin' an' yer body whin you're dead."

Corny was obedient to all the directions, looking on with a sort of stupid wonder at the skill and quickness with which Tighe attended to the patient. The tender-hearted fellow's hand was as gentle as a woman's, and the patient little sufferer evinced his gratitude by a frequent effort to smile.

The cut was not so deep as Tighe had feared, and by the time it was carefully washed, and the soft, thick, curling hair

cropped from about it, it seemed to need no more than a simple bandage. The boy lay back on the pillow with a sigh of relief, and closed his eyes; indeed, fatigue, more than pain, seemed to distress him, and Tighe drew the curtains, and motioning Corny to follow him, stole to a distant part of the room.

"I don't know one thing about him, Corny," explained Tighe in a whisper, "only I saw the horses dash him under their fate, an' I was frightened intoirely; thin whin I lifted him, it wint to me heart the way he tould me that he had no home, an' the look wid which he axed me not to let thim take him to the hospital. That's the whole o' it, Corny; but oh, won't me mother be plazed whin I tell her o' yer noble goodness this day!"

"Pshaw!" said the little man, trying to cover by affected indifference the glow of pleasure into which he was thrown by the last words.

"A few days' rest," continued Tighe, "will make him all roight; an' now, Corny, I have a word to tell you about mesel'."

Mr. O'Toole drew his chair closer, and very affectionately patted Shaun, who was sitting gravely between them. The allusion to Mrs. Carmody had made him well disposed to take an active interest in everything pertaining to Tighe a Vohr.

Tighe continued, still in a whisper: "The young masther is so sthrictly guarded that not one at all'll be let to see him, an' Father Meagher an' the young ladies had to go back to Dhrommacohol yisterday the same as they kem, widout one sight o' him. Well, Mr. Garfield——"

"The quartermaster that I wrote the letter to in the Widow Moore's name?" interrupted Mr. O'Toole.

"The very same, Corny; an' roight well yer letther was recaved; he doesn't belave to this day that there's a bit o' a joke in the matther, an' what wid his own consistin' on bein' where the widdy is, an' followin' her loike a ghost, he's the spoort o' the town; an' she hates the soight o' him as the

divil hates howly wather. Oh, but I'm tould it's a soight to behould her freezin' looks at him, an' the cowld shouldher she gives him ivery way, an' he, poor *omadhaun*, thinks it's all roight bekaise we tould him so in the letther. You moind the contints o' the letther, Corny?"

"I do," said Mr. O'Toole, with a glow of pride.

"Well," resumed Tighe, "her brother Jack isn't a whit bether than hersel'; he's down on the poor fool o' a quarthermasther too, an' he's been thryin' to make all soorts o' spoort o' him. He succeeded in makin' him bet himsel', an' get the bets o' his frinds, on a horse that has the thrick o' goin' lame betoimes whin there's to be a race; an' now for this race that's comin' off in a wake or so, poor Garfield hasn't a horse nor a rider, an' he'll be out a hundhred pounds or so; besoides bein' the manes o' his frinds losin' also. Are you takin' it all in, Corny?"

"I am," answered that gentleman with a very solemn air.

"Well, whin I heerd that, an' heerd, too, that the masther's frinds wouldn't get nigh nor nixt him, an' also that the masther himsel' will be kept here a month, I jist wint to work thinkin'—hard thinkin', Corny."

Tighe paused, and looked sharply into his listener's face, as if to question what the latter's surmise would be regarding the result of his severe cogitations. Mr. O'Toole, by way of answer, spread both his hands firmly upon his knees, bent his body forward, and looked as sharply into Tighe's face, his look expressing:

"What *did* you think?"

"Me thinkin' kem to this, Corny: that if I could foind another horse an' a rider for Mr. Garfield, in his gratitude *he* moight foind a way for us all to git seein' the masther."

"Timothy Carmody, I'm proud of you!" the little man stood up, and shook Tighe's hand; "you are your mother's own son, and you deserve to be Timothy O'Toole."

He had forgotten in his eagerness his previous whispered tones, and had spoken aloud; but Tighe pointed to the

bed, and put his finger on his lip, and Mr. O'Toole, having wiped his face and given a careful twist to his sidelocks, sat down.

"It was aisy enough to think so far," resumed Tighe, bringing his mouth in close proximity to Corny's ear, "but it was the divil's own job to think where I'd get the horse. I used to be a good hand at conthrivin' to get thim some way for our own races afore the masther was thransported; an' I'm thinkin' now I'll have to do what I used to do thin—take the lind o' a horse widout axin' the owner's lave, an' hould mesel' prepared to be a marthyr for the consequinces."

"But how will you take the time to find the horse, an' to ride him in the race, engaged as you are at present?" said Corny, pointing significantly to Tighe's dress.

"Lave me alone for that," answered Tighe a Vohr; "Shaun here,"—affectionately placing his hand on the dog—"was the manes o' managin' it for me. Faith, I don't know what I'd do at all widout Shaun?"—turning a look expressive of the fondest regard on the scraggy animal. "I shpoke to Captain Dennier this very mornin' about lavin' his sarvice. He was the surprisedest man iver you seen, Corny. 'Lave me!' he says, 'what for? Arn't you thrated well?'

"'I am, yer honor,' sez I; 'betther thratement I couldn't wish for; an' if it was restin' wid mesel', I'd be contint to sthay wid yer honor always.'

"'Well, what is the throuble?' he axed thin; 'tell me plainly, Tighe.'

"Thin, Corny, I purtinded to be awful shy intoirely, an' to be soort o' disthressed loike; an' to restore me confidence, an' to make me feel aisy afore him, he bid me take a sate, an' he took one himsel', an' he sez:

"'You know, Tighe, I promised Captain Crawford to purvide for you, an' I'd loike to kape me word; besides, I'm plazed wid you mesel' an' I'd loike you'd sthay.'

"'I would, yer honor,' I answered, 'but the life in the barracks doesn't suit Shaun at all.'"

"Oh, Tighe," interrupted Mr. O'Toole, "you didn't say that!"

"The divil a lie in it, Corny; I said that wid as sober a face as I have this minit, an' I wint on, while the captain sat bolt upright in his chair, an' looked at me as if he thought I had lost me sinses: 'Shaun,' sez I, 'is a delicate dog, an' what wid the confinement o' the barracks, and the excitin' sight o' the soldiers, he's gettin' thin and worrisome. He was always used to the counthry, an' to plinty o' liberty, an' I'll have to go away wid him for a few days.'

"Thin the captain sez: 'Well, Tighe, if I give you lave o' absence for a wake, would not that recruit your dog?'

"'No,' sez I, thinkin' o' the race; 'nothin' less than two wakes'd do—Shaun's strinth is run down, an' he requires particler thratemint.'

"'Well, take the two wakes,' sez he. So here I am, Corny, wid two wakes holiday afore me, an' a good aisy place at me back."

There was a faint call from the curtained corner. Both Tighe and Corny were instantly at the bedside.

"Where am I?" The dark eyes were opened wide in wondering surprise, and the head half lifted from the pillow.

"Oh, I mind it all now,"—as Tighe's sympathetic face appeared in the opening of the curtains; "I was knocked down by the horses, and you picked me up and brought me here;" and the most ravishing smile that Tighe thought he had ever seen played on the perfect features.

"Don't be thryin' to talk," said Tighe, softly, "for if you'll be quiet, you'll be well in no toime. Lie down now,"—as the boy endeavored to rise to a sitting posture—"an' Corny here'll make you a cup o' tay—the rale weed that he kapes in his own private canisther. Won't you, Corny?"

"To be sure I will," answered Corny, immediately beginning to bustle about the necessary preparations.

"Let me tell you," pleaded the boy, catching one of Tighe's hands in his fevered grasp, "you look so kind that you bring

my heart back to Cathleen. It won't hurt me,"—as Tighe doubtfully shook his head,—"I'll not say very much; and—oh!"—with a cry of terror, and a spring that brought him to an upright sitting posture,—"what did I do with it—have I lost it?" He searched his bosom wildly. It came forth at last, a piece of folded paper, and with a sigh of intense relief, he caught it fast in his hand, and threw himself back exhausted on his pillow. Tighe would have drawn the curtains and left him, but the little fevered hand again grasped him. "Stay," whispered the boy, "I shall be better in a moment, and I can tell you."

He did rally, and Tighe was forced to hear him.

"I am to take this paper,"—holding up the latter,—"to Dhrommacohol, and give it to some one there that they call Rick of the Hills."

Tighe no longer bade the boy desist; he was listening now with most eager attention.

"Mr. Carter gave it to me to take. He was stopping at Hoolahan's, where I had my meals and a lodging yesterday, and my breakfast this morning. He wanted this note to be taken by hand, for he was afraid if he sent it by post it wouldn't reach Rick of the Hills, by reason of the latter not being always in the one house. He gave me directions if I didn't find him at once to go to two or three other places. One of the women in Mr. Hoolahan's told him I could be trusted, and he was so anxious to have the note go quick that he bade me start at once; and now what'll I do if I'm not able to take it?" He looked with touching anxiety into Tighe's face.

"I am goin' down to Dhrommacohol this very day," answered Tighe a Vohr, "and I know Rick o' the Hills, an' if you'll thrust me, I'll take it to him."

"Trust you," the boy said, "after what you have done for me! I'll trust you, and I'll be so happy to know that the message went, and that Mr. Carter won't be disappointed." He gave the paper into Tighe's eager hand, and continued: "Up in Ballygarry, where I live, everybody was kind to me,

mostly, I think, because I was an orphan ; I had a home with one and the other of them, and a bit of schooling once in a while ; but the kindest of all to me was Cathleen Kelly. She taught me to read and write, and she told me such beautiful things about God and His blessed mother that I used to think she must have been in Heaven herself to know so much of them. She lived with her aunt and her cousin, a young man as kind-hearted as herself ; but he went away to join the boys when the news of the rising came, and not very long after a letter came from a priest to say that he was dead—he had been shot in some fight with the soldiers. Oh, then was the time of grief for Cathleen and her poor old aunt, for she was the young man's mother. Their hearts seemed to be breaking, and once in a while I'd hear a word dropped that told me how they were aching to know more particulars of his death ; and then it got into my head that if the priest who wrote the letter, and who said in the letter how he was present at the death-bed of William Kelly, could come to see them it would console them entirely. I *did* say to Cathleen that she and her aunt ought to make a journey to see the priest, but there seemed to be some queer thing hanging over it all, as if there was a secret reason to prevent the journey. When I saw that I made up my own mind to make a journey myself to this priest unknownst to any one. Quite careless-like I got out of Cathleen the name of the priest, and the place he was in, and the way one might take to get to him, and I started, sometimes begging my way, and sometimes airning it. I only got here yesterday, and I happened on Hoolahan's place to beg a meal. One of the women there was very kind to me ; she gave me a lodging and fine meals, and I told her where I was bound for, but I didn't tell her my business. That was yesterday evening, and this morning she came running in to me when I was at my breakfast, saying that there was a gentleman outside who wanted a message carried to a place that I'd have to pass through on my way to see Father O'Connor."

"Father O'Connor!" interrupted Tighe, his face and attitude expressing his thrilling interest in the artlessly-told tale.

"Yes; do you know him?" questioned the boy.

"I have seen him," answered Tighe evasively, not knowing how prudent it might be for him to say more until he had heard the conclusion of the story.

"Well, I went out to see the gentleman, and he seemed pleased with my looks, for he gave me the note at once, and said to me what I told you before. And now I'll rest."

He was very tired; not even the tea which Corny had more neatly prepared than would have been deemed possible from his slovenly surroundings, and of which the injured boy largely partook, seemed able to delay even for a moment the lethargy into which he sunk. Judging rightly that repose would benefit him most, Tighe partially closed the curtains again, and left the bedside. He motioned to Corny.

"They say all's fair in love an' war," he whispered, "an' as I'm at war wid ould Carther there can't be any harrum in readin' this." He opened the paper and put it into Corny's hand. The latter seemed to take a similar view of the case, for without any hesitation he softly read:

"RICK:

I have decided to go to Dublin, and the sooner I go the better it'll be for my own interests. I promised Ned Malony a fortnight ago that I'd be down there in time to bring his horse, 'Charmer,' up here for the race that's coming off next week; but I can't do that now. He'll have to bring the horse up himself. Show him this note, and tell him to have no fear. Joe Canty is booked to ride him, and it will be time enough to have the horse in Blenner's stable the day before the race. Tell him the stakes are all right, and that we have heavy backers. And do you, Rick, keep sober, and when I return, be prepared to do what I told you.

Yours,

MORTIMER CARTER."

Tighe jumped to his feet, his features undergoing a series of most comical contortions, which were intended to express

his intense satisfaction and delight. It was with difficulty he refrained from giving utterance to a loud, wild cheer, the manner in which he usually manifested his joy. "Be the powers, but the saints thimsels' are helpin' me; was I iver in such luck afore! Corny, don't you see how I'll manage now? You'll write a note to Mr. Maloney, Ned Maloney, the ould miser, imitatin' this handwritin' as if it kem from Carther, an' you'll mintion me in it; you'll not say a word o' Rick o' the Hills, but you'll jist bid ould Maloney to give up the horse to me care, an' I'll bring him up here, an' stable him till the race comes off; an' tare an' ages, but that'll be the race to knock the soight out o' Morty Carther's eyes whin he hears o' it! are you comprehindin', Corny?"

Corny nodded.

"Well, do you set to work at once at the writin', an' I'll run down to the quarthermasther an' tell him to inter his horse an' his rider as quick as he plazes. But what'll be the name o' the horse?"

"Timothy," suggested Corny.

"Timothy!" contemptuously echoed Tighe, "that's too small entoirely. No; we'll give him one o' the classical names out o' the histhory o' Ireland—a name that manes somethin'."

"Brian Boru," ventured Corny.

"That will do," answered Tighe; then he continued: "An' the rider'll be mesel', Timothy O'Carmody; for there's nothin' like havin' an O or a Mac afore the first letther o' yer name; it gives one a big feelin', a sinse o' importhance."

Corny nodded, and Tighe, having satisfied himself that the boy was peacefully sleeping, departed on his errand, followed by Shaun. Scarcely an hour elapsed when the bark of the dog in the passage leading to Mr. O'Toole's chamber announced Tighe's return. He was in the same state of joyful excitement in which he had departed, having seen Mr. Garfield, and having delighted that gentleman with the tidings he had brought, and he had received in return from the grateful

quartermaster an assurance that the latter would make every effort to afford Carroll O'Donoghue an interview with his friends.

"An' now, have you the note ready for ould Maloney?" asked Tighe.

"I have," answered Corny, proceeding to read from a half sheet of letter-paper:

"MR. MALONEY:

I have decided to go to Dublin, and the sooner, the better it will be for my own interests; consequently I won't be able to go down for the horse as I promised, but I send you, in my place, Tighe a Vohr, and you know as well as I do the divil a better judge of horse flesh in the county. He will bring 'Charmer' up here and see that he is properly stabled. Joe Canty is booked to ride him, and the stakes are all right. Have no fear, for we have heavy backers, and let Tighe have the horse at once. Yours,

MORTY CARTER."

"Be me sowl, Corny, but the loike o' you for a letther writer isn't in the counthry!" and Tighe gazed with delighted admiration at the little man. "Me mother missed it entoirely," he continued, "whin she didn't become Mrs. O'Toole."

Corny was violently wiping his face to cover his blushing delight.

Tighe continued: "But it'll be in me power, an' that afore long, to place afore her eyes all that she lost whin she took Timothy Carmody!" and Tighe's voice suddenly assumed an indignant energy.

Mr. O'Toole was in a glow of pleasure from the bald crown of his head to the soles of his ungainly feet.

Tighe moved to the bed to look again at the boy. He was still sleeping, a slight hectic flush on his cheeks, and the rest of his face as white as the bandage which bound his head.

"He's as purty as a picther," said Tighe softly to Corny, who had also noiselessly approached, "an you'll moind him well, Corny; av coorse, if he should get worse, you'll have to call in one o' thim murtherin' docthors; an' I suppose, too,

the minnit he can sthir at all he'll be for makin' his way to Father O'Connor. Thry an' kape him anyway till I get back."

Corny promised; indeed the little man, to use one of his own expressions, was so wedded to Tighe's interests now that he would spare neither time nor labor in his service.

"Supposing Maloney should refuse you the horse," said Corny, as Tighe stood on the threshold ready to depart.

"Supposin' he did," repeated Tighe, "do you think his refusal'd bother me?—not the laste bit. I win tthrough bolts an' bars afore whin I was in a loike scrape, an' now that I know ould Maloney has a horse in trim for the race, an' that ould Carther is safe in Dublin, the divil himsel' wouldn't stop me gettin' possession o' the baste for the day o' the ride."

"Will you stable him at Blenner's?" asked Corny again.

"Faix, I will not," was the reply. "Is it stable him where the eyes o' ivery sportin' man in the town'd be on him, an' mebbe to have somethin' thranspire to show thim the deravin' game I'm playin'? No, Corny; I have more gumption than that. I'll stable him outside the town intoirely, where no one'll be the wiser, an' where I can go ivery day an' get acquainted wid him, an' foind out his wake pints, an' larn if he has any thricks. An' there's another thing, Corny, I'll have to attind to, an' that's Joe Canty. He'll be expectin' the horse, I suppose, an' tatther an' ages! mebbe he'd be goin' down to ould Maloney's to have a look at the baste, if he hasn't gone already. Well, I'll vinture on a settlemint wid him this way: I'll make it me business to see him afther I've seen ould Maloney, an' I'll tell him that the horse'll be to the fore on the mornin' o' the race; that ould Maloney is a quare soort o' ould man,—an' the divil a lie in that—an' so perticler about his horse that he won't lave it out o' its own stable any sooner; an' that he's so crass, an' so cantankersome, he won't have anybody comin' down here to look at the baste, swearin' if they do that he won't let it run. I'll tell all this to Mr Canty, at the same toime makin' it appear that I'm thrusted

intoirely be Carther an' Maloney, an' if all that doesn't do, I'll depind on me natural wits for another invintion." He paused as if in some indecision, resuming in a moment: "The thing that bothers me most jist now is how I'll get the dress for the race—the cap, an' the jacket, an' the toggery that makes a man look as if the wind was taken out o' him; but I'll think o' that on me way. Good-by, an' take care o' the boy."

He hastily departed with Shaun at his heels.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE MISER OF DHROMMACOHOL.

Mr. Maloney, or "ould Ned Maloney," as he was called by man, woman, and child, from his antiquated dress, which for a quarter of a century had never changed a seam nor a cut of its fashion, was the only real miser of which the little village of Dhrommacohol could boast. Money was his idol, and money he worshipped to the exclusion of every other affection, natural or acquired. Neither mass nor meeting ever saw him; the poor feared him, and the neighbors whose dealings forced them into contact with him regarded him as a sharp, shrewd, hard man. Report spoke of him as being somewhat better educated than most of his class, yet he was never known to invest a half-penny in even a newspaper. The latter he borrowed when he could, and when he was unable to do that he resigned himself to the privation. He had never married, and his few kinspeople had been long since laid at rest in Kilboroglin churchyard. He lived alone, spending his time, the people said, in counting the gold and the pound notes which he had made in former days by running illicit stills and smuggling foreign goods. Some good people were wont to cross themselves when they met him, as if he were the Evil One himself, and the poor said he would never die on his bed. Old Ned smiled grimly when he saw and heard these evidences of the regard in which he was held, but all produced no change in him. The only person for whom he seemed to care was Father Meagher; he shrunk from meeting the priest, and when the latter would force his presence, as he often did, upon the miser for the purpose of rebuke or exhortation, the old man would fall on his knees,

cross himself, and swear that he'd repent before he died. The horse had come into his possession by means entirely in accordance with Ned's hard practices. The owner of the animal, a neighbor of Maloney's, and in desperate straits for money, ventured to appeal to the miser for a loan; it was refused, but Ned, with his habitual cunning, where the matter involved a question of gain to himself, and in view of the races which marked certain portions of the year, offered to buy the horse. There was no alternative for the unfortunate owner, and a bargain was at length made which left old Ned Maloney in possession of as magnificent a racer as there was in any stud in the county. To everybody's surprise he built a better stable for the horse than he had a house for himself, and he actually hired a groom that the animal might be kept in fine condition. To Mortimer Carter, whose frequent visits to Tralee, and whose intimate acquaintance with the sporting characters of the day were generally known, Ned Maloney addressed himself in order to negotiate for the entering of his horse in the coming race. There was little difficulty in accomplishing that, but a serious trouble remained—to procure a good rider. Joe Canty, an admirable horseman, but a dare-devil and a bravado, was already engaged to ride for the English soldier, Garfield. Carter, however, brought his wits and his money into action, and Canty was secured for the horse. The miser, tempted for once from his wonted extreme parsimony by the largeness of the sums which Carter and other bettors had staked upon the horse, bet a considerable amount himself, as well as opened a betting-book; and it was with extravagant signs of satisfaction that he frequently in imagination footed the amounts which were to swell his already well-filled coffers in the event of "Charmer's" success.

Such was the man to whom Tighe a Vohr, accompanied by Shaun, was quickly wending his way. The abode of the miser was as antiquated and ill looking as himself. A general shop in which he drove hard bargains with those who were forced from some necessity to deal with him formed the entrance to

the abode ; and back of this in a dingy room he cooked, ate, and slept, though in addition to his shop he owned a good-sized and well-stocked farm. On Tighe's entrance he came hurriedly forth from the dingy apartment.

"How do you do, Mr. Maloney? Glory be to God, but you sthand it well to be lookin' so young at yer toime o' life!" and Tighe seized the miser's not over-willing hand, and gave it a hearty shake.

Mr. Maloney was a tall, powerful man, with a stoop in his shoulders, and iron-gray hair framing a hard, massive face. He had black, glittering eyes, set deep under eyebrows that met so heavily and arched so little as to appear like a continuous line across his forehead ; his thin lips were partly stretched over projecting tusk-like yellow teeth, and his prominent cheek-bones, and triangular-shaped brow made up a face at once remarkable, sinister, and repulsive. His age might be sixty, or more, but the giant frame gave evidence of vigor enough to mark a much less advanced period of life.

Fortunately for Tighe, there had never been any unpleasant intercourse between himself and the miser ; though he knew the old man as well, and disliked him as thoroughly, as any one in the village, still out of an indolent good nature, or perhaps because opportunity had been wanting, he had never betrayed in the miser's presence any of the tokens of dislike of which others were so lavish. On one occasion, when a mere lad, with his wonted obliging disposition, he had even rendered some trifling service to the old man, and it was noticed ever after that the latter's manner to Tighe a Vohr was marked by more civility than usually characterized it. Now he answered with a slowness which betrayed his excessive caution, and which evinced his indifference to Tighe's compliment to his looks :

"Thank you, Mr. Carmody, I'm pretty well."

Tighe drew forth his note. "I've been in Tralee, this while back," he said, holding the note between his fingers, "watchin' the coorse o' the bets on the race that's comin' off

nixt wake, an' if yer horse don't win, Mr. Maloney, there' be a power o' losers."

The miser's glittering eyes began to grow in brightness. "You don't mean to say, Mr. Carmody, that there's such a number of backers?"—even his voice had quickened.

Tighe saw his advantage and pursued it. "I do that, Mr. Maloney; an' betune you an' me, an' all that I heerd from Mr. Carther about yer horse, the divil a show the others'll have alongside o' him at all."

"How many are entered for the race, Mr. Carmody?"

That was an item of information with which Tighe had singularly overlooked providing himself, but without a moment's hesitation he answered: "Now, since Rody Crane's filly is withdrawn, it laves foive; yis, I think it's foive that'll run, includin' yer own. But I was forgittin': Mr. Carther sint me down wid this to you." Proffering the note.

The miser took it to a dim, greasy lamp, and read it apparently more than once.

"I suppose Carter knows best," he said, returning to Tighe; "he says you will stable him properly, but I wouldn't trust him without his groom. I shall send the groom with him."

"Very well, Mr. Maloney," answered Tighe, apparently quite satisfied, though the groom was an accession of which he did not dream, and for the disposal of whom he was sadly puzzled.

"I shall have him ready for you to-morrow morning," the miser resumed; "will that be time enough?"

"Oh, yes; answered Tighe carelessly, continuing after an instant's pause: "Do you know the man that's to ride yer horse, Mr. Maloney—Joe Canty he's called?"

"No; I have never seen him, though I was expecting him down next week to see the horse; but I suppose it will be more convenient for him to have the horse in Tralee. I understand that he is a very fine horseman."

"The divil a betther, but——" Tighe's fertile brain was hard at work—how would he prevent Joe Canty's visit to Mr. Maloney?

"But what, Mr. Carmody?" The glistening eyes were fastened unpleasantly on Tighe's face.

"Mr. Maloney,"—Tighe took a step forward, and assuming an expression indicative of severe mental distress, he said in a lower tone than he had previously used: "I heerd somethin' to-day that med me feel purty bad iver since; an' all the way down here I've been houldin' an argymint wid mesel' whether I ought to tell you or not; it was in a saycret it was revaled to me be a sarvint o' one o' the spoortin' min; it consarns you, Mr. Maloney, but I'm loth to tell, for mebbe it's none o' me business afther all; an' I'm aqually loth to kape it, for thin I'll be lookin' at an honest man loike yersel' losin' hapes o' money."

"Losing heaps of money!" the miser wildly repeated, and his giant frame trembled like an aspen; he clutched Tighe's hands with his bony fingers. "Tell me, Mr. Carmody; what did you hear?"

"Och, what'll I do at all, at all?" cried Tighe, in well-feigned distress; "och, why did I spake an' it a saycret; sure I'll only be gittin' mesel' in trouble!"

"Tell me, Mr. Carmody," repeated the miser, tightening his trembling grasp of Tighe's hands.

"Will you kape the saycret too, Mr. Maloney, if I tell you—will you swear afore Heaven that you'll niver revale it, no matther what comes or goes?"

"I will, Mr. Carmody; I'll do anything for you, only tell me."

"Thin down on yer knees an' repate what I say."

The large form knelt abjectly before Tighe, while Shaun, close by his master's side, stood sharply watching; at the first grasp of Tighe's hands by the miser the dog had sprung from a comfortable couch which he found on an old rug to Tighe's side, and he only waited further demonstration of force toward his master on the part of the old man, to spring at the latter's throat.

"I swear——," said Tighe solemnly.

"I swear,——" repeated the kneeling man, in a voice that shook as much as did his powerful frame.

"Afore Almighty God, an' all the angels an' saints this noight,——"

Again the trembling repetition from the miser.

"That I, Ned Maloney, will never revale to man nor mortal a syllable o' what Tim Carmody is goin' to tell me; if I do may me sowl burn in hell's fire foriver!"

It was all faithfully repeated, and Mr. Maloney was allowed to rise.

"Well, the saycret is this," said Tighe: "Joe Canty is to be arristed for debt; he's been thryin' to stave off his creditors till the race would be over, but there's one crusty old chap that has a grudge agin' Joe, an' he's detarmined to take it out o' the poor fellow in more ways than one. He's goin' to wait till the very mornin' o' the race, an' it's betune a couple o' peelers poor Joe will foind himsel', instead o' on the back o' yer horse."

The miser's glittering eyes were distended till they seemed twice their size, and his wide mouth, partially open, disgustingly revealed his yellow teeth.

Tighe continued: "If you want to take the chances o' Joe Canty's arrist, Mr. Maloney, an' let things go on as they are, why, well an' good—I'll have nothin' more to say; but if you'll take another rider for yer horse, I'm yer man!"

The miser started back as if the suddenness and unfitness of the proposition had overcome him. Tighe followed him, assuming an energetic, independent air.

"I'll win the money for yer backers, Mr. Maloney; do you think I'm not able? thrust yer moind back, an' see if you can remimber me iver losin' a race that I was engaged in, even wid the best spoortin' min to the fore. Don't I know ivery inch o' the counthry they're goin' to ride nixt Tuesday, an' can't I judge a horse from his snaffle to his fetlock? How and iver, Mr. Maloney, I'll have no more to say in the matther; you're bound to kape the saycret, an' as for the rest, you can blaze versel'. I'll be here in the mornin' for the horse."

"Stay a moment, Mr. Carmody," besought the miser, "give me time to consider the matter."

"There's no considerin' to be done," replied Tighe half impatiently; "the matther is as plain as a, b, c,—ayther take yer risks wid Joe Canty to foind him arristed on the mornin' o' the race, an' yer horse, av coorse, withdrawn (for it would be too late thin to change things), an' thim that's bet on the other horses'll be only too glad o' the evint, for it'll be somethin' in their favor, an' you may be sure it isn't for yer interests they'll be carin'; you can do that I say, or on the other hand you can jist put Joe Canty off whin he comes down here to see the horse by sayin' you won't have him looked at till the mornin' o' the race; he'll think you're a bit cracked, mebbe, or the loike, but what odds'll that make as long as you've some one to ride him that'll secure yer money? An' for that matther, I can go to him wid a message from you, biddin' him not to come down here, that the horse'll be ready for him on the mornin' o' the race, an' that he can't see him afore; that'll kape him from inthrudin' on us till we're ready for him; he'll think iverything is all roight, an' in the manetoime I'll have me name booked as if I had a horse to ride in the place o' Rody Crane's filly that I tould you was withdrawn. I can do that aisily, as long as I do it in toime, an' the lists won't be closed till to-morrow evenin'. Thin, on Tuesday nixt, when Mr. Joe Canty foinds himsel' on the way to the jail, I can sthand for'ard to take his place; be rayson o' havin' me name booked they can't object, an' I can make it appear how I'm a frind o' yours, an' couldn't sthand by an' let you be thrated in such a manner as that; an' niver fear but ivery one o' the bettors on our side'll be ready to back me. Now, understhand, Mr. Maloney, it's no intherest o' moine one way or the other—it'll nayther put a pinny in me pocket, nor will it take a pinny out o' it; but I couldn't sthand by quietly an' let a man be bate out o' the sum o' money you'll lose nixt Tuesday, whin it was in me power to purvint it."

The miser's eyes seemed to glitter through Tighe, so bright

and so continuous was their sparkle, while he listened to the rapidly-delivered assertions. Tighe had a dim idea that his arguments were very illogical, but he trusted that the volubility and rapidity with which they were delivered would so becloud the old man's brain as to leave him with little power of reasoning beyond the fact that if he did not accede to his visitor's proposition he would be sure to sustain a great pecuniary loss. Tighe's wish seemed to be gratified; the miser *was* confused by the rambling statement, which his ignorance of sporting affairs made all the more rambling and incoherent to him, while at the same time he was impressed with Tighe's forcible and apparently honest manner.

"I should like to communicate with Mr. Carter," he observed, his whole manner indicating trouble and perplexity.

"What for?" asked Tighe in well-feigned indignant astonishment. "Now, Mr. Maloney, didn't you swear solemnly afore Heaven that yer soul moight burn foriver in hell's fire if you revaled a syllable o' what I tould you? An' for what else'd you be writin' to Carther for? If I tould the saycret to you to save yer bit o' money from bein' thricked out o' you, that's not sayin' that I'm goin' to bethray intoirely the confidence that was put in me; an' besides, Mr. Carther hasn't the money at stake that you have, an' he won't be the loser that you will. But there's one condition I was forgettin"—the last words were owing to one of Tighe's sudden thoughts, and with his wonted quickness he determined to act upon it, though it was shadowed with some misgiving; —"if I ride for you, you'll have to give me the money for the jockey's dress. I can have it med in the town be givin' the order in toime."

The miser's brow knitted.

"I see, Mr. Maloney," resumed Tighe, "you're not sathisfied, an' I'll not force you; the risk is yer own, an' I have a clane conscience now; I've discharged me duty loike an honest man, so I'll bid you good evenin'."

Again he turned to depart, and he had almost reached

the door of the little shop when the old man hurried after him.

"One moment, Mr. Carmody; how much money will this dress cost?"

"Oh, the matther o' a pound or so," answered Tighe, looking as if he were very unwilling to be longer detained; "but I'd rather you'd dhrop it all now, Mr. Maloney; to ride for you will only be throuble an' inconvanience for mesel'. I didn't think o' it afore, but now that I'm givin' the matther reflection, it'll be best for me not to do it. Agin I bid you a very good evenin', Mr. Maloney."

He turned quickly and shot out of the open doorway. The miser was after him, out on the road, begging him in an abject manner to return. "I will give you a pound, Mr. Carmody,"—and he fumbled in his breast.

Tighe returned with him to the shop, watching with no slight inward satisfaction the dirty leather wallet slowly and reluctantly brought forth. He turned his back to Tighe while he opened it, and when at last he faced Tighe a Vohr holding out the required amount, his hand trembled so that it seemed as if the bank-note would drop from his fingers. Tighe took it, pocketed it carefully, and then with a hurried air, as if anxious to make up for lost time, he said:

"Now, Mr. Maloney, I'll be here bright an' airly in the mornin' for the horse, an' do you tell the groom to be bidable to me directions. Thin, whin I get to Tralee, an' see the horse properly stabled, I'll make it me business to call on Mr. Canty, an' deliver yer message to him; an' if he persists in comin' down here afther that do you act the part I prescribed for you. Are you quite ready an' willin', Mr. Maloney, to do all that? no hesitation now, but spake up loike a man."

"Yes," answered old Ned, as if the monosyllable was choked out of him.

"Very well thin; an' mebbe whin you're the gainer o' as many pounds as I have holes in me *caubeen*,—" pointing to his tattered head-gear—"you'll have cause to be thankful to Tighe a Vohr."

There was no solicitation this time to return, and Tighe, with Shaun at his heels, was soon taking hasty strides toward his mother's humble home.

"I may as well kill two birds with one stone," he murmured to himself; "I'll see me mother, an' thry if I can't put in a good word for Corny O'Toole; it will rise the spirits o' the little man, an' kape him me constant frind; an' faith, mebbe I'd need him agin in the way o' writin' or the loike."

CHAPTER XXII.

CARTER VISITS DUBLIN.

MORTIMER CARTER was desperate. The fact that his perfidy seemed so well known to both clergymen caused a horrible fear that through their united efforts something might occur to intercept or destroy his plans. He chafed at the bare possibility, and as he walked the narrow confines of his temporary lodging after his meeting with the little party from Dhrommacohol, he muttered to himself, with the savage and threatening look of a wild beast disturbed from its lair :

"A lifetime in the one pursuit ! I failed with her mother, but by the powers I shall have *her*, though the devil should have my soul the minute after ! She turned her face away from me to-day ; I am a traitor and a worm in her sight !" He clinched his hands and paced the room with quicker strides. "Oh, to bring her proud head down ! but it shall be brought down, and that soon. Rick will be prepared to do what I ask him when I return, and if I can succeed in getting Carroll to try to escape again perhaps he will be shot in the venture, and that will be quicker for me than to wait for his hanging."

He ceased walking, and standing by the low mantel, folded his arms upon it and gave himself up to moody thought. Captain Dennier's manner to him on the occasion of their last interview had been productive of many a doubt and fear ; he regretted, also, having given the Fenian document to that officer ; he could have cursed bitterly for not being himself the bearer of it to Dublin ; then, the promised reward—there was an ambiguity about even Lord Heathcote's assurance to him which did not point so surely to the compensation as the

traitor desired. What if on the completion of his web of treachery he should find that he himself had been caught in the meshes! the thought was maddening, and goaded to an extremity to which in calmer moments he would scarcely have proceeded, he determined to go immediately to Dublin. Rumor had it that thither Lord Heathcote had repaired after his last visit to Tralee; he would see that high military official, and have a distinct settlement, as well as an assurance that the paper which he had given to Captain Dennier had been received by the proper authorities. He remembered the race for which he had entered Ned Maloney's horse, but a moment's thought convinced him that that need prove no obstacle to his journey; the preliminaries of the race were all arranged, and Joe Canty, now that he was really secured for the animal, was too good a horseman to require any supervision; beside, the numerous backers, as interested as Morty was himself, were sufficient to guard the interests of all concerned. He would be obliged to break his promise of bringing the horse up to Tralee, but old Maloney could do that himself, or failing to do it, he could trust the animal to the groom for the journey. These points settled in his mind, he hastily wrote the note which he subsequently intrusted to the boy who was injured by the overthrown gig, and then he rapidly indited another to Joe Canty, which he also sent by hand; the latter message simply stated his intended absence from Tralee and the uncertainty of the precise time of his return. To Dublin then he set his face, only to find, when he reached the capital and repaired to the castle, that there were more difficulties in the way of seeing Lord Heathcote than he had anticipated. He chafed at the delay which involved a loss of days and rendered him more desperate and eager. It dawned upon him at last that the difficulties in the way of seeing his lordship were interposed by the latter himself; then he sent up an importunate card, and after still further delay he was conducted to the nobleman. Dignified and cold to sternness, Lord Heathcote received his visitor; but the latter had fortified himself

too strongly to be abashed by the haughty presence, and having made his obeisance, he responded to the curt :

"Well, Mr. Carter, the object of this visit?" by :

"I have ventured to intrude upon your lordship in order to settle serious doubts which have arisen in my mind."

"Regarding what?" asked Lord Heathcote, eying him coldly, and for an instant toying with one of the medals on his breast.

"Regarding the paper containing information of the *Irish Republic* which I gave by your order to Captain Dennier."

"I can quiet your fears about that," was the cold response. "The paper, in a sealed cover, was delivered at the castle, and it is now, with other sealed papers, in possession of the proper authorities ; it will play an important part on the trial of the prisoners who are now confined in the county jail at Tralee. Have you any further business, Mr. Carter?"

Still unabashed by the increasing sternness of the nobleman's tone, or the cold manner which so plainly signified a desire for the visitor's departure, Carter said :

"Captain Dennier's own manner to me, stigmatizing me as a traitor, and showing by his words that his sympathies were more with this country than with his own, led me to fear that there might be foul play with the document."

There was a knitting of his lordship's brows for an instant, and a firmer closing of his rigid mouth ; but he made no response. Carter, hurried by his short-sighted eagerness into a remark which should compel some reply from the haughty, impassible being before him, continued :

"Believe me, your lordship, incapable of saying aught which might lessen the affection you bear Captain Dennier ; as your——"

"Cease!" the nobleman thundered, bounding out of his chair, and standing before Carter with so stern and commanding a mien that the traitor trembled and shrunk. "Years have passed since that time," continued his lordship in the same voice ; "how have you penetrated my secret now—

speak!" The last word was uttered in a still more peremptory tone, as Carter, wholly unprepared for the anger he had aroused, and vainly wishing he had been silent, stood in cowering hesitation. But that peremptory tone would brook neither delay nor evasion. He forced himself to meet the keen eyes bent upon him as if they would pierce him through, and he answered with a painful tremor in his voice:

"The secret of those years ago, your lordship, has always been safe with me; I have never revealed it, and I should not have known this now but for the gossip of the barracks——" He paused.

"And that gossip?" demanded his lordship; "what did it reveal?"

"Your singular interest in the young officer, an interest that extended over years, and the resemblance between his manner and your own—how it was marked by the same sternness and power of command; it flashed upon me then, your lordship, that Captain Dennier was——"

"Stop!" almost thundered the nobleman; "never must tongue utter that word! it brings back the disgrace, the pollution of that unfortunate, that miserable past."

Unhappily excited, despite his evident determination to remain calm, he paced the room with nervous and hurried tread. Carter watched him, regaining confidence and assurance as he saw this evidence of his power to move that stern and haughty soul. Suddenly he stopped before Carter; he had subdued his emotions and his mien had recovered its calmness.

"Have you betrayed this knowledge, these *suspicions*"—with an emphasis on the last word, as if he would force the belief upon Carter that the latter's mind, ignorant of the true facts in the case, held suspicions alone—"of yours, to any one else? have you hinted of them to Captain Dennier?"

"No, your lordship; I had too much regard for you; I would let the revelation of this come from yourself; it was not my place to know aught."

"You have acted well;" for an instant there was a distinct softening of the harsh voice; the next, however, it had recovered its repellent tone; "why did you not tell me what you have told me to-day, on the occasion of our first meeting in Tralee garrison, when you brought yourself to my notice and reverted to our acquaintance twenty-seven years ago?"

"I had not then, your lordship, penetrated the present state of affairs."

Lord Heathcote was silent for a moment, looking keenly at Carter the while. At length he said:

"You will maintain the same secrecy for the future?"

"Certainly, my lord;" and Carter bowed as low as his corpulent form would permit him to do.

Lord Heathcote, evidently considering the interview ended, turned aside to summon an attendant for the purpose of conducting Mr. Carter out; but the latter had another, and to him, a most important item of business.

"Will your lordship kindly re-assure me about the reward for my information? Captain Dennier referred me to you for conference about it, though he told me of your promise to attend to it on the conclusion of the trials."

"Well,"—there was an accent of impatience in his lordship's tone—"what assurance do you wish?"

"That you will use your influence to secure for me the amount of money which I named when I had the honor of a previous interview with your lordship."

"Your price is high," said Lord Heathcote; "what do you propose doing with such a sum?"

Carter replied: "To purchase the encumbered estate of the O'Donoghue family."

His lordship, without answering, resumed his seat, covering his face with his hand, and gave himself up to thought; Carter patiently waited, a complacent smile half curling the corners of his mouth. "The O'Donoghue family?" repeated his lordship at length, looking up; "the family, I presume, from whom comes this young Australian convict who was recap-

tured on information furnished, I believe, indirectly by you."

Carter bowed, and the nobleman continued:

"The estate became encumbered by debt."

Again Carter bowed; Lord Heathcote still continued:

"And you would install yourself on this estate? Well, Carter, if this last information, which you say is so valuable and the most important you have yet given, proves to be all that you claim for it, I have little doubt of your getting the reward you have stipulated."

Carter appeared to be satisfied; he was profuse in his thanks and bows, and when he left the nobleman's presence it was with a mind considerably relieved, and with courage entirely renewed for his nefarious plans.

CHAPTER XXIII.

TIGHE A VOHR'S PROPOSAL TO HIS MOTHER.

WITH a comparatively light heart, having accomplished much of his self-imposed mission more successfully than he had dared to hope, Tighe a Vohr trudged on to his mother's house; he did not rebuke Shaun's gambols, and if it was not for the weight upon his heart caused by the thought of his imprisoned young master, he could have broken into the merriest of glees; as it was, the strain died in his throat, and a prayer for poor, unhappy Carroll found its way to his lips instead.

"Wisha, welcome, Tighe asthore!"

And Tighe a Vohr, to his agreeable surprise, found himself, instead of being scolded and reproached, as he had half expected, heartily embraced by his fond, simple old mother. Curious to know what could have made her conduct so different from that which he had anticipated, he said slyly, when released from her loving clasp: "Why thin, what has happened to you, mother, that you're not angry wid me for shtayin' away so long?"

"Because I know all about it, Tighe, darlin'; wasn't I up to Father Meagher's, an' didn't his riverince tell me himsel' that he was plazed wid you, an' that he had great hopes intoirely o' you?"

"Oh, that's it!" said Tighe, slowly, as if he was taking time to understand his mother's explanation; the same while he was thinking how changed would be Father Meagher's notes of praise could the worthy priest know the number of falsehoods recently told by Tighe, and wondering, also, if the old lady knew of his late visit to Dhrommacohol when he and

Moira employed Shaun to such effectual purpose. If she did, it was still more surprising that the vials of her wrath were not poured upon his devoted head, for upon that occasion he had departed without paying her the semblance of a visit. But it was evident that she did not know, for she made no allusion to it; Moira, probably suspecting that Tighe did not call upon his mother, had prudently refrained from mentioning the visit. His mother seemed, however, to have particulars of his meeting with Father Meagher and the young ladies in Tralee, and to know about his fortunate recovery of Shaun; and at last she turned to bestow a little of her affectionate attention upon the dog. The animal never responded demonstratively to any attentions, however affectionate, but Tighe's, and now he received all Mrs. Carmody's pats on the head, and stroking down of his long straggling hair, and all her phrases of welcome, such as: "I'm rale glad to see you, Shaun—an' it's a foine dog you are!" with a gravity quite befitting his canine dignity. With pride and delight the old woman learned that her son would remain until morning; and she hastened to put fresh touches to the room which she always kept prepared for him, and to set out the remains of her own frugal supper. Tighe ate and drank, and took so much pains to be his own old bright, witty self, that the simple soul was lost between admiration and affection. Tighe read it all in her face, and he was well pleased, for in that happy state of mind, she would better receive the communication he was about to make: a communication that was costing him more apprehension than his visit to old Ned Maloney had done.

"Mother," he said, taking one of her hands affectionately in his own, "it's very lonely for you here wid me away so much."

"It is, Tighe," replied the innocent old soul; "but I'm contint so long as no harrum comes to you, an' that I can see you once in a while."

Tighe shook his head. "It's many an anxious thought I

have o' you, mother, whin I'm away from you, an' somehow I can't help feelin', that is"—glancing furtively into her eyes, and experiencing a sudden dread of coming to the point—"that is, thinkin', havin' a thought—a soort o' an idea—jist a somethin' that"—— disconcerted by his fast-growing fears, he paused outright.

"That what? say it out, Tighe," entreated the old lady.

But Tighe still found it difficult to bring himself to an accurate expression; he continued to beat about the bush. "A soort o' a feelin' that somehow comes round me heart—a squeezin' loike that makes me think o' I don't know what—a sinsation——"

"Why, thin, Tim Carmody, what are you dhrivin' at?" broke in the old lady, too impatient and too angry to hear further; "what do you mane be spakin' in such riddles to yer poor ould mother?"

"Aisy, mother, awhile," coaxed Tighe, "an' I'll tell you; only give me toime, for it's a delicate subjict." Then straightening in his chair, as if he was desperately nerving himself, he continued: "I was often thinkin' that if you had a husband to take care o' you whin I'd be away——"

He was cut short by a half shriek from his mother, accompanied by the noise of the falling stool which, in her sudden rising from it, she had upset. She stood before him, her arms akimbo, her face as red as the handkerchief about her neck, and the frilled borders of her cap shaking threateningly with every indignant word she uttered.

"Timothy Carmody, if you have no betther word for yer ould mother than an insult loike that, it'd be fitter for you to shtay in the barracks you kem from. It was wid no intintions o' matrimony a second toime that I buried yer father, God rest his sowl, an' it's wid no sich disrespect o' the good man in his grave that I've been a widdy all these years. Oh, that I should live to hear me own son axin' me to marry!"—sudden emotion was overcoming her—"me, a respectable single, forlorn widdy, nineteen years come nixt Candlemas!" Quite

broken down, she threw her apron over her head and began to sob.

Tighe was sorely puzzled; he could cozen Corny O'Toole, he could manage old Maloney, he could deceive the love-sick Garfield, he could impose on Captain Dennier, and he had little apprehension of being able to make Joe Canty swallow one of his plausible inventions, but how to win his mother was entirely beyond him. He looked ruefully at Shaun, who seemed to understand the situation and to sympathize with his master, saying to the dog in a whispered aside which the loudness of his mother's grief prevented her from hearing:

"She's a woman, Shaun, an' that explains it; if she was a man there'd be rayson in her; but the wimen are always onmanageable. Mother,"—after a pause during which Mrs. Carmody's sobs had become less frequent—"I'm sorry for insultin' you, but it was out o' the kindness o' me heart that I spoke; I was thinkin' o' the poor fellow that's heart-broken wid love o' you."

The apron suddenly dropped, and the sobbing ceased.

"Yis," said Tighe, growing hopeful as he saw the sudden change produced by his last remark, "it was for *his* sake that I vintured on me onlucky spache to you."

"Who is he?" interrupted his mother.

"No less than Corny O'Toole," blurted Tighe, rising from his chair, and standing with folded arms as if he had nerved himself for the worst.

There was a pause, during which Tighe was the object of a look of withering scorn; then there burst upon him in accents of trembling indignation:

"Corny O'Toole, is it? Bad luck to yer impidince, Tim Carmody, for wantin' to throw the loike o' him at me! he hasn't a sowl above the letthers he writes, an' he's as ugly an' musty as the one little dirty room that he cooks, ates, an' sleeps in. You can tell him from me that if it's marryin' a second toime I was thinkin' av, it's a dacent husband I'd look for, an' not the loike o' yellow, wizened Corny O'Toole."

And with the borders of her cap still indignantly shaking, and her whole form responding by its tremor to her outraged feelings, she flounced into Tighe's chamber and slammed the door hard behind her.

Tighe remained in his erect position, too astonished and too discomfited to do more than look after his mother, and then turn his eyes with a crestfallen air to the dog.

"That's bad for Corny," he muttered. Then with a sigh as if he had heroically resigned himself to circumstances, he resumed his seat, and patting Shaun, relieved himself by one of his wonted addresses to the animal. "It was no lie, Shaun, whin I tould Garfield that wimen wor quare; faith, from one to the other o' thim, from Moira Moynahan down to me own mother, they have as many thricks as a wild colt. 'Yellow, wizened, Corny O'Toole'—thim's the words she used; so it's a fair face she wants; I don't know if I tould Corny to powdher would it help matthers." He shook his head dolefully, as if the idea met with little favor, and at length, unable to make affairs look more hopeful, he threw himself on the settle and was soon sound asleep.

His mother, her indignation spent, and her affection for her scape-grace son back in all its wonted ardor, stole softly to his side; having fondly contemplated his round, rosy face, and soft brown hair clustering in curling profusion round his forehead, she called softly: "Tighe, darlin'!"

The sound of the voice partially disturbing Tighe's slumbering senses, gave a livelier turn to his dreams; in another moment he was talking in his sleep:

"Whisht, Corny! it's too yellow you are—the ould woman has an eye for beauty; you won't do at all, *ma bouchal*."

"Tim Carmody!" and the old woman, again rendered irate by the disjointed phrases which she knew had reference to herself, gave her son a vigorous shake. Tighe started up, his slumber-bound faculties not yet in a condition to remember that he was in his own home with his mother beside him, instead of in Corny O'Toole's little bachelor apartment.

"Don't be so obstrepolous, man," he said, striking at his mother under the impression that it was Corny's bald head that glistened before him; "I popped the question mesel' for you, but it was no use."

By this time he was quite awake and realizing, by his mother's face and his own consciousness of having talked in his sleep, that he had hindered more than ever the result he wished to effect.

"Timothy Carmody!"—whenever she called him by his full Christian name, Tighe knew that his mother was hurt in her most tender spot. "Niver agin, as you respect me gray hairs, an' the bones o' yer father in his lonely grave, talk the way you did to-noight. Yer father, may the heavens be his bed, was a foine, big man, six feet in his shoes, wid a clane, sthraight face that hadn't one crooked feature. It's enough to have him turn in his coffin, to mintion the loike o' Corny O'Toole in the same breath."

"Very well, ma'am," answered Tighe meekly; "an' I humbly ax yer pardon for all I said."

His penitent air quite mollified the old woman, and restored him to her favor; he was conducted with affectionate *eclat* to his own room, and soon peaceful slumber bound the eyelids of all within the little cabin, including Shaun, who slept at the foot of his master's bed.

CHAPTER XXIV.

TIGHE SECURES A HORSE.

TIGHE was astir early the next morning, and ready for his visit to old Ned Maloney. With many an affectionate entreaty and loving counsel, his mother, entirely recovered from her indignation of the previous night, and satisfied that Tighe's inner man was fortified by a hearty breakfast of her plain but abundant fare, allowed him to depart. Tighe did not immediately betake himself to the miser's shop; he had friendly calls to make on some of the neighbors whose residences lay between the car-office and the dingy-looking shop. He was welcome everywhere, despite his vagabond reputation, for his qualities of good nature and simple candor when, to use his own words, "he had no divarsion on hand," made him universally beloved. Pressing were the invitations which he received to rest himself and to partake of a bountiful though plain hospitality; but Tighe thankfully declined, and adroitly turned the random conversation upon Ned Maloney.

"I heerd a quare story about him," said Tighe, dropping his voice to a whisper that brought his eager listeners close to him; "they say there's some gintleman from Tralee comin' down here in the course o' the wake to see him, an' that the ould sinner kapes a blundherbuss on hand to shoot the gintleman the minit he puts his nose inside the shop."

"The cross o' Christ betune us an' harrum," spoke up one of the women hearers, devoutly crossing herself, "sure that's dhreadful!"

"It's awful!" said Tighe, lifting his eyes in pious horror; "an' it'll only be the dacent thing for all o' you down here so near the car place, where he must surely come, to be on the

watch for him—sure any o' the bright-witted gossoons that are always round the cars will twig him in a minit; he's a spoortin' man, an' his name is Mr. Joe Canty; be followin' him a little distance they can see whether he makes for Maloney's place, an' if he does, some o' you grown folks can jist go an' beg him not to go there, but to turn back as fast as he can. If I could shtay down here I'd do it, but I can't."

"Oh, *we'll* do it, Tighe," spoke up all the voices at once

"It'll be a noble act," resumed Tighe a Vohr; "an' tell the other neighbors, so that whin you all together waylay Mr. Canty he'll surely have to belave you, an' he'll get away wid his loife; but don't let ould Maloney know a syllable o' this; nor don't let him see you watchin' him any more than usual, for there's no knowin' what desperate turn he moight take among yersel's."

"Thrue for you, Tighe; sure they say he signed his sowl to the divil long ago for the sake o' good luck in his stills an' his smugglin'."

Tighe shook his head; "I am afeerd the divil'll have himsel' an' his money afore a great while."

"But what is the rayson," asked one of the more inquisitive of his listeners, "that he wants to shoot this gintleman?"

"The divil alone, besides ould Maloney himsel', could tell you that," was the response; "he has such terrible saycrets, that same ould man, that it'd take betther brains than any one here has to discover them. I'm goin' down mesel' to see him this mornin' on a thrifle o' business for another person, an' it's frightened enough I am afther all I've heerd o' him to go near him."

"*You* needn't be afeerd, Tighe," spoke up a couple of voices; "he's always been purty civil to you."

"You niver can thrust a miser," was Tighe's reply, as with a friendly farewell, responded to by hearty God-speeds, he departed.

The miser, seated in the doorway of his shop, was awaiting his expected visitor. A greasy coat, buttoned so as to

conceal his shirtless bosom, hung upon his spare form, and his great bony hands, resting on his knees, gave little evidence of any recent ablution. Tighe's salute, accompanied by an energy and independence of manner assumed for the purpose of impressing the old man, was slowly and gravely returned. Then without another word he bade Tighe follow him to the stable. Report had not exaggerated when it said that old Ned Maloney had built a better stable for his horse than he had a house for himself; the stable was a stanch, comfortable structure, well-roofed, well-floored, and abundantly supplied with straw and forage; and the groom was a close, wiry fellow, who evidently knew his business weli. The horse was led out, and stood in all its noble proportions before Tighe, whose eyes sparkled as he noted the signs—a task in which no one in the county was better versed than himself—that marked the horse as being sound of wind and fleet of limb; from the proud arch of his neck to his slender legs the animal was the thorough-bred racer, with the blood of sire and dam telling in every spirited motion. Tighe's admiration was loud and ardent.

"There's no fear, Mr. Maloney, but he'll win the race; he's a rale beauty!" and with his wonted artfulness Tighe began to display his horsemanlike powers—vaulting on the back of the steed, and with his knowing hand causing him to prance, and corvette, and amble, in the inclosed space which surrounded the stable, till both the old miser and the groom were convinced of Tighe's superior skill as a rider. Then, when Tighe deemed that he had given sufficient exhibition of his powers, he dismounted, and immediately began to hurry the groom's preparations for departure.

Out on the road, and Tighe made full use of that talent for droll story-telling which he possessed in no limited degree. Having ascertained by apparently aimless questions that the groom, shrewd and artful as he appeared, was unacquainted by any personal experience with the topography of the country three miles beyond Dhrommacohol, Tighe determined to

so divert the attention of the fellow that he would forget to observe the direction they were taking, or the places through which they were traveling, beyond such information as Tighe himself chose to volunteer. And he succeeded: the mind of the groom was so amused, perplexed, and at last so beclouded with the absurd stories in which horses, devils and ghosts were mingled in strange and terror-striking fashion, that the little, wiry fellow was as abstracted and absorbed as his sharp companion wished him to be. Tighe announced at last the termination of the journey, and Arty Moore, the groom, shook himself like one awaking from deep sleep, and looked half stupidly about him. A wide stretch of open country, environed by hills, lay before him, and the only house in sight was that which they were about to enter—a small thatched dwelling, with what appeared to be several out-houses adjoining. The groom's full consciousness returned, and with it the suspicions which were peculiar to him.

"I thought we were going to Tralee," he said, halting within a step of the doorway; "that's what I understood from Mr. Maloney, and that the horse was to be stabled there."

"And who said we weren't?" said Tighe, turning round with an assumption of fierceness before which Moore shrunk. "Didn't you tould me you were niver in Tralee?"

"I did," answered the man with a crestfallen look; "but my common sense tells me that this isn't the town of Tralee."

"Well, mebbe yer common sinse would tell you how far out o' the town we are," mocked Tighe; "an' mebbe that same common sinse that you brag av would tell you I have a very good rayson for what I'm doin'—an' one that's to Mr. Maloney's intherest. Now, tell me one thing:"—going very close to the groom, and continuing his intimidating manner,—"didn't Mr. Maloney himsel' tell you to be attintive to *my* directions?"

"He did."

"Very well thin; mebbe you're sharp enough to know that there's a great dale depindin' on this race; or mebbe you haven't the gumption to see that there's somethin' to be

put in yer own pocket if you have discretion in the matther. Which is it now ?"

That was a shrewd way of detecting whether Arty Moore, Ned Maloney's groom, was too faithful to the miser's interests to be bribed into betraying them. But the groom's principles were not of the stanchest kind, and there was no very cogent reason why he should be faithful to old Maloney at the risk of a pecuniary loss to himself ; with a snap of his black eyes, he answered :

"Trust me for that ; I'm not particular which master I serve, so long as the money's to the fore."

Tighe turned upon him with well assumed indignation : "Hould, you thraitor ! is that the way you're sarvin' the poor, lonely old man that thrusts you ? It'll not overtake me to let him know your characther."

"Oh, Mr. Carmody, for the love of God don't !" and the trembling wretch was almost on his knees at Tighe's feet ; "I meant nothing by it ; the words only escaped me ; but Mr. Maloney'd believe them, and I'd lose my place ; it's an easy one, and a pretty good one so far, and I have a wife and family depending on me."

Tighe pretended to be unmoved for a few seconds ; then he seemed to yield only for the sake of the dependent family.

"Will you swear to be thrue to Mr. Maloney's intherests be moindin' sthrictly what I tell you ?"

"I will, I swear solemnly I will !" answered the groom.

"Very well, thin ; you're not to answer any one a single question about this horse, save that you're his groom, an' nothin' more ; you're nayther to tell the name o' the baste, who is his owner, nor the man that's to ride him ; if the ould b'y himsel' was to sthand afore you an' demand such information, you're to refuse to give it, both now, duriu' these few days afore the race, and till afther the race is over. Do you consint to all that?"

"I do, willingly," was the earnest answer.

The stable to which the horse was led was hardly as com-

fortable as the one from which he had been taken, but at least it was sufficient for the proper housing of the steed ; and the sight of old Maloney's bank-notes, that Tighe ostentatiously displayed, made the owner of the stable, which was annexed to a little shebeen, very willing to make every addition in the way of provender. Tighe was satisfied, and having renewed his injunctions of secrecy to the groom, he departed.

His first impulse was to seek Mr. Joe Canty ; his next to depute Corny O'Toole to deliver the message ; for this step he had an important reason : it might be rather an awkward *contretemps* to have Mr. Canty on the morning of the race recognize in the jockey who would step forth to ride for Quartermaster Garfield the person who had been the bearer of a message from Mr. Maloney, the owner of the horse that Canty expected to ride ; it might cause suspicion of foul play, sufficient to arrest Tighe's part in the race even before he had begun it. Thus deciding, he turned his steps to Corny O'Toole, faithful Shaun, who never lost sight of his master, closely following. He found that the little stranger had departed not an hour before, having sufficiently recovered under Corny's skillful treatment, and he found Corny himself in a very contented frame of mind over a piece of bacon and a dish of smoking potatoes.

" Just in time, my boy ! " and the little man, with refreshing promptness, arranged a place for Tighe at the homely table. The meal was heartily welcome to the tired Tighe a Vohr, and the palatable fare, (Corny was an excellent cook) together with the contents of a little black bottle, which came forth from a recess in the closet after the table was cleared, put Tighe into very sanguine spirits. He related his success with Maloney and the groom, at which Corny signified his delight and admiration by slapping his knees, rubbing his hands together, and giving forth frequent low, prolonged chuckles. Then Tighe paused, and took another draught from his glass. Knowing the little man's peculiarities, he was doubtful of gaining his consent to take the message to Mr. Canty.

"I had an intherview wid me mother, Corny."

"Did you now?" Mr. O'Toole imbibed from his glass, the rosy color of the liquor perhaps helping to make the blush which came into his wrinkled face.

"I did that, Corny; an' you were mintioned; yis, Corny, you were mintioned be the mother an' the son."

Mr. O'Toole arose. "I trust, Mr. Carmody, that no allusions were made to disturb your mother's widowed feelings; rather would I bear my own unhappy sentiments to the grave; yes, sir!" and he stood erect, glowing with the consciousness of his noble rectitude.

"Sit down, Corny, an' let me tell you; the mintion o' you put me mother in a very feelin' mood intoirely; she was touched, Corny, be yer sintimints for her." And Tighe's conscience was quite innocent of any falsehood this time; for, as he afterward expressed to Shaun, "sure me mintion o' Corny *did* touch her, only, begorra, it touched her in the way that Corny wouldn't loike. Yis," pursued Tighe, "an' in toime, Corny, whin the rale goodness o' yer noble heart becomes fully known to her, an' she has her eyes opened to all that she missed whin she tuk Timothy Carmody in preference to yersel'——"

"Not in preference, Mr. Carmody," broke in the little man, with dignity, "but because I didn't ask her in time."

"I beg yer pardon, Corny, that's what I meant. Well, as I was sayin', whin she has her eyes opened to all this, she'll be proud an' happy to become Mrs. O'Toole." He stood up and shook Corny's hand with prolonged vigor. Mr. O'Toole replenished the glasses.

"We'll drink, Tighe, to your mother's health."

"To the future Mrs. Toole," responded Tighe a Vohr. Corny was in a state of the highest satisfaction,—pleased with himself, with his visitor, and with his surroundings; and Tighe, in the same happy state, judged it would be a very good time to broach the true object of his visit.

Mr. O'Toole looked a little doubtful: "I don't know, my

boy, how I'll bring myself to do that. I haven't been in society since your mother married, and I haven't much mind for talking to any of these sporting characters."

"The divil a hap'orth you'll have to say to any o' thim but Mr. Canty himsel', an' thin, barrin' he draws you into any remarks o' his own, you have nothin' to tell him but that Mr Maloney desires him not to go down there to see the horse; an' you nadn't moind puttin' the message in very sthrong words ayther; for if he won't belave you, an' if he *will* go down to see old Maloney, faith it's a quare welcome he'll get both from the people in Dhrommacohol an' the miser himsel'!" and Tighe laughed heartily as his imagination vividly pictured the crowd that would surround unsuspecting Mr. Canty, entreating him to return.

"May be he'd ask me if I came straight from Mr. Maloney," said Corny; "what will I answer then?"

"The thruth, Corny," responded Tighe, with the energy of conscious virtue; "always spake the thruth. Lies is bad ivery way, as degradin' to the man that tells thim as to the man that listens; and there's nothin' loike the voice o' a good conscience for makin' a man feel himsel' afore the world, an' o' importhance in his own eyes."

"Right, my boy; every way right!" responded Mr. O'Toole.

"Tell him, Corny, that the messenger who kem direct from Mr. Maloney is at yer house, but for some rayson he couldn't take the message himsel', but gev it to you; an' that'll be the thruth, anyway: sure I have the best o' raysons for not wishin' to meet Mr. Canty this while yet."

At length it was settled; Corny agreed to take the message to the "Blennerhasset Arms," the most probable whereabouts of Mr. Canty, and Tighe departed to seek Garfield for the purpose of bringing him out to view "Brian Boru."

CHAPTER XXV.

MR. CANTY.

A soft, bright morning, a country redolent of balmy air and new-mown hay, and the perfume of a thousand wild, but sweet-scented flowers, that decked the fields on every side, together with the prospect of winning his money and redeeming his honor, all conspired to put William Garfield, quartermaster in her Majesty's —— Regiment, in excellent spirits, as in company with Tighe a Vohr, and both mounted on horses capable of a fair gallop, they cantered through the stretch of country which led to the stable of "Brian Boru." The Englishman was in a humor to relish Tighe's laughable and original remarks about the locality through which they were riding, the people, their habits, and everything that Tighe could facetiously twist or make up into a story of laughable absurdity or startling interest. His conversation, however, was not without a frequent random remark regarding the Widow Moore, a careless observation containing some item of news about her that was of profound interest to the love-smitten soldier; and once the artful fellow insinuated how report had it that the widow was excited about the coming race, and anxious for Garfield's success. The soldier was in a glow of anticipation and pleasure.

"Only win for me, my dear fellow," he said, clapping his hand familiarly for an instant on Tighe's shoulder, "and you will make me your lasting friend, willing and eager to serve you in everything."

"The divil a fear o' me losin' for you; I niver lost a race yet. But wait till you see "Brian Boru;" if his beauty doesn't quicken the soight in yer eyes me name's not Tim Carmody!

only I've a word of caution : don't dhrop any remark afore the groom that you'll foind wid the horse—don't even call the horse be name ; for the groom is a fellow not much to be thrusted, I think, an' if he suspected that you were the man I was to ride for mebbe I couldn't kape the saycracy I want to kape till the day o' the race. You can let on to be a careless frind o' moine that's jist come out for divarsion's sake to have a look at the baste."

The soldier was strictly obedient to Tighe's injunctions, and though the lighting up of his heavy face, and his start of delighted surprise when the magnificent animal was led out, betrayed his admiration, he was careful not to drop a syllable of remark. Tighe lightly mounted "Brian Boru" and proceeded to still further surprise and delight the soldier by an exhibition of his skillful horsemanship. Garfield was in an ecstasy of joyous anticipation ; he could hardly wait for the exhibition to be concluded, and until Tighe and himself were in the silent open country again, on their return, when he burst forth :

"I feel as if I owe you an apology, my friend, for my past distrust of you ; yes, I own,"—becoming more frank as he looked into Tighe's wondering and apparently artless eyes—"that until this morning I did not entirely trust you ; there was a lurking doubt which I could not explain to myself that perhaps you were deceiving me ; but this morning, Mr. Carmody, has obliterated all that. I believe you fully now, and I thank you from my heart !"

"That's always the way," responded Tighe ; "thim that's innocint is suspected, an' thim that's guilty escapes."

"I did not forget, Mr. Carmody," resumed the soldier, "my promise to you, and out of gratitude I shall fulfill it this very day. I hope I shall be as successful for you as you have been so far for me. Come to the barracks to-night, and I shall have an answer for you."

Almost at that same moment Corny O'Toole was having his interview with Mr. Joe Canty in the coffee-room of the "Blen-

nerhasset Arms." He had sought that gentleman on the previous evening, but without success, either at the "Arms" or at Mr Canty's residence, and at the latter place Corny was told that he would surely find him at the "Arms" by a certain hour the next morning.

Mr. Joe Canty was the type of a sporting man: not too tall, lithe, wiry, with a look about the legs as if they were always holding themselves in readiness to mount, and a dash and swagger about his bearing that marked the trickster and the dare-devil. From his small, keen eyes, to the tawny mustache which shaded his upper lip, there was an expression of half scorn, as if he were constantly mocking his surroundings, and treating to mental sarcasm his very associates. He was popular among sporting circles, because of his abilities in that line; and the latter, sharpened by an extraordinary shrewdness, had made him a most successful counselor on betting interests. He was surrounded by an eager group of his own class, when it was signified to him that some one wished to see him.

"Let the person come in here," he said, too eager, in his animated description of some race, to care to cease or to break the thread of his voluble account by leaving the company.

Corny O'Toole was ushered in; his drab gaiters, bringing into more prominent view his ungainly feet, were surmounted by pantaloons that, having shrunk in size, stood sufficiently above his gaiter-tops to reveal to a considerable extent a pair of brown stockings; the color of the unmentionables, once black, had become a dingy brown from age and wear, and gave evidence in the several light-colored spots on their surface of hard and valuable service. The upper part of his body was incased in a tight-fitting body-coat; a quarter of a century before it probably fitted its wearer, and could boast of being cut in the style of the day: but now it bore as antiquated a look as if it had been handed down from the ark, and it was so tight and short a fit for him whose stout, wide

back it covered that it suggested the idea of a straight-jacket. His shirt-bosom, innocent of starch, hung limp and abundant on his breast, and the equally limp collar about his neck was ornamented in front by a flaring crimson bow. His sidelocks, oiled and curled, were plastered in greasy twists against the sides of his yellow, wrinkled face. The sight of this strange, comical, antiquated figure provoked a smile that before long deepened into a broad grin upon every face. Corny had not forgotten his old-time bow, when he was a younger and more gallant man, and with this profound salaam he saluted the company, giving a supplementary courtesy to Mr. Canty, whose person he knew. "Your servant, sir; and I would like a word with you."

Mr. Canty drew himself up, the interruption which Corny's entrance had proved to his story having put him in no gracious mood. "Speak out," he said haughtily; "what is it you want?"

Mr. O'Toole's dignity was hurt; fondly imagining that he was gifted with literary genius, his absurd conceit led him to fancy, also, that others must read his mental superiority in the very poise of his form and the expression of his face. This humiliating slight to which Mr. Canty was subjecting him was very galling. He flushed and trembled. "Mr. Canty," he said, in deeply indignant tones, "I came here with a message from Mr. Maloney, of Dhrommacohol; if you were the gentleman I thought you were, I'd deliver it to you, sir, in full; but since you're not, I'll put you to the trouble of asking questions;" and Corny assumed his most fierce and dignified attitude.

A half-suppressed laugh went from mouth to mouth, while the circle of amused listeners drew closer to Corny, their faces expressing an eager anticipation of something ludicrous and racy. Mr. Canty did not join in the laugh—he was too much nettled by the situation in which he found himself; and with a still more haughty, supercilious air he answered: "Your message is your own concern, sir; whether you deliver it or not is immaterial to me."

"Very well, Mr. Canty, you can take your own risks of what'll happen to you before long!" and Mr. O'Toole, with a most ludicrously dignified bow, was turning away.

"For shame!" echoed a couple of voices; "the message may be of importance; question him, or give one of us permission to do so."

"Act your pleasure, gentlemen," responded Canty, curtly; and one of the foremost of the group, shrewdly devining Mr. O'Toole's vanity, pretended to pander to it by as absurd an air of deference as ever marked the mien of O'Toole himself.

"I beg you, my dear sir, to overlook the gross incivility with which you have been received, and state your message to me."

Corny was mollified and pleased; his wizened face relaxed its severe expression, and he smiled upon the speaker.

"Mr. Maloney desires Mr. Canty not to go down to Dhrommacohol to see his horse, 'Charmer'; the animal is kind of touchy, and won't bear looking at, nor trial. On the morning of the race Mr. Maloney'll have him here in time."

Mr. Canty's supercilious air changed to one of violent indignation. "Does Mr. Maloney suppose that I'm going to obey any such message as that—not see the horse I'm going to ride till the very morning I'm expected to mount him? you can pay my respects to the gentleman, and tell him I shall have the pleasure of introducing myself to him to-morrow afternoon."

"You had better not," answered Corny, turning upon him with an air which he meant to be intimidating, but which was only a most laughable assumption of fierceness.

"Indeed!" sneered Canty; "pray who are you who have been deputed to direct my movements?"

"Who am I?"—all the little man's spirit was aroused; the blood of the princely O'Tooles tingled in his veins, and gave courage and animation to his voice. "Who am I?" he repeated; "a better man than ever you were!—I come of the house of O'Toole, where kings and princes had their rise and

fall; my pedigree is unstained, and my ancestry is one I am proud my posterity can boast of; among my posthumous descendants"—in his excitement Corny was confusing his words—"was a great-grand-aunt who, with her own hands and her own noble exertions, educated three hundred young men for the priesthood; they went in a body to Rome, and were received in the Vatican by the Pope himself. Yes, gentlemen," —continuing with greater emphasis—"the Holy Father entertained them, and drank with them all to the health of my noble grand-aunt."

A shout of laughter cut Corny short. Every man was holding his sides, and squirming and contorting his body with the most violent ebullition of mirth. Even Canty was forced to join in the merriment. Corny was enraged; to have this glowing account of himself and his race, which he intended should be received as a convincing proof of his title to blood and breeding, thus mockingly interpreted was more than his O'Toole spirit could bear. He turned with renewed indignation on Canty:

"Now let me tell you, sir, who *you* are. You are the grandson of a tinker who went mending his wares over the country; your father wasn't much better, and your mother was the daughter of an ignorant *shebeen*-keeper; and as for yourself, you have the breeding of a knave who wouldn't mind betraying his own father, providing it put a pound in your pocket!"

This home-thrust, pointing so directly at the base part which Canty had played in allowing himself to be bought from an engagement to ride for Garfield, stung the sport to the quick. He sprung at Corny, but a dozen hands pulled him back before he could strike the blow aimed with desperate force at the little man's face; and more than one voice urged Corny to depart, a request with which Mr. O'Toole, whose courage, while it was equal to a war of words, dwindled before a display of muscular force, eagerly complied; the flowing tails of his body-coat were speedily seen flying through the open doorway.

CHAPTER XXVI.

MR. CANTY'S RECEPTION.

MR. GARFIELD'S efforts in behalf of Tighe had succeeded, owing to the quartermaster's intimate acquaintance with one of the chief officials of the jail, all had been admirably managed; by what particular means the soldier did not choose to say; and Tighe was too happy to ask for further information than that an unobstructed passage would be afforded the prisoner's three friends, provided they came at a certain hour on the ensuing night. Tighe was so delighted that he could hardly wait for the mail-car to bear him to Dhrommacohol. As he stepped from the car he met Father Meagher, who was just returning from his parish rounds; the clergyman's face brightened when he saw Tighe a Vohr, and he extended his hand in hearty welcome.

"I have good news, father," he whispered, when they had gone beyond curious observation; "to-night you will be let into the prison to see Mr. Carroll; you and the young ladies."

"How did you manage that, Tighe," asked the priest; "did you obtain a pass?"

Tighe was somewhat nonplussed; knowing the clergyman's stern integrity, his severe reprehension of anything that pertained to deceit or dishonor, he could have borne better to be executed than to confess to the clergyman by what plans of deception he had contrived to bring about the present fortunate state of affairs.

"Now, Father Meagher," he said, after a pause during which he pretended to be concerned about Shaun, who was sportively chasing a butterfly, "it goes to me heart to have you all the toime wantin' to know the whys an' the where-

fores o' me doin's—it tells so plainly that you have no thrust in me."

The clergyman looked full in the face of Tighe a Vohr; not a muscle of the latter's countenance moved, save to return the gaze by one of most dolefully injured innocence.

"I mane it, father; an' if you'd only listen whin I bring you news loike the prisint, widout axin' to know how I kem be me good luck, I'd be the happiest man aloive. I'm thryin' to be good, yer riverince, sayin' me *pathers* an' *ares* dutifully an' kapin' from me usual divarsions——"

"Except the drink, Tighe," interrupted the priest slyly.

"Oh, yer riverince, as to that, I'm kapin' sthraight intoirely; barrin' a wee dhrop that I had wid Corny O'Toole yestherday, whin the heart was wake widin me, I haven't touched a sup since—since I promised Moira I wouldn't."

Tighe looked up a little fearfully; he dreaded the effect of his last words on the clergyman; but the latter, without seeming to notice it, resumed: "You say that everything is arranged for our visit to-night?"

"Yis, father; there isn't one thing to do but to put yersel' under me care until we rache the jail, whin I'm to give you in charge o' a trustworthy person."

Father Meagher made no further observation, save to insist that Tighe should accompany him to the little pastoral residence, in order to be refreshed after his journey.

"And how, yer riverince, is Moira to behave to me?" Tighe asked, with a roguish twinkle, as he stood hesitating on the doorstep of the little dwelling; "is she still under ordhers not to spake to me?"

"Tim Carmody, you are an artful rogue!" Despite the severity the priest strove to assume, a smile curled his mouth as he remembered the trick which had been played upon him by his niece and Tighe a Vohr. He continued: "It was well you knew how to get over the difficulty when she was under orders, as you term it! and you'll never be at a loss while you have Shaun for a mouth-piece."

Tighe rolled up his eyes till the whites alone were visible, muttering: "He knows it; begorra, he knows all about it!"

Moira was permitted to speak to him, and while Clare and Nora, in a flutter of anxiety and joyous anticipation, owing to the tidings which Father Meagher brought, were making hasty preparations for their afternoon trip to Tralee, Tighe and Moira were enjoying an undisturbed conversation in the kitchen.

The sun was in the full glare of its noonday heat when the little party of four left the pastoral residence to take their way to the car-office. But a strange excitement possessed the little village; men, women, and children were converging to one spot—the street on which old Maloney's abode fronted, and where there might be witnessed an unusual and remarkable scene:—a man in fashionable sporting dress surrounded by a motley crowd of men, women, and children, some clinging to the skirts of his coat, others on their knees before him, and all gesticulating and hallooing in the wildest confusion. The sporting stranger, red, perspiring, and desperate, sought to get on from his captors; but they, each moment swelled by some new accession, who, knowing nothing of the origin of the excitement, yet catching the infectious passion of the moment, shrieked and gesticulated as wildly as those who had come earlier upon the scene, fettered every step he attempted to take. At last with a sudden dash he cleared a passage, and darted with the speed of a hare toward Maloney's shop. The miser had not been deaf to the uproar almost at his door, and in trembling agony for the safety of his hoarded gold, which he imagined the rabble were seeking, he hastily barricaded door and window. With carbine in his shaking hand, he stood ready to intimidate the first who should force an entrance. On they came, Joe Canty, in torn and dilapidated plight, at full speed, and the whole motley, howling crowd after him.

By this time Father Meagher, having left the young ladies

in the care of Tighe, arrived on the scene, and his presence and voice restored sufficient order for him to learn that the stranger, on his peaceable way to see Mr. Maloney, had been surrounded by a number of people who acted as if they were mad, entreating and praying him to return immediately to the place whence he came; indignantly refusing to do so, he had been set upon in this howling manner. The priest had not another moment to stop if he would catch the car, and with a hasty rebuke to the crowd, among whom he recognized all the scamps of his parish, he hurried away; and once that his reverence was out of sight, that portion of the crowd who knew the cause of the "set-to" on Mr. Canty, and who were determined to keep their promise to Tighe a Vohr, began anew their entreaties.

"Don't you see how ould Maloney has his dure locked agin you? it's as much as yer loife's worth to go foreninst the ould sinner."

"Do, *ma bouchal*, go back afore you're killed!" "You're too foine a gintleman to be sthretched the way the ould miser's blundherbuss'll lay you." "For the love o' Heaven go back afore you're a corpse intoirely!" Such were a few of the many shrieking entreaties with which Mr. Canty was freshly assailed. He raged, and swore, and left half of his coat in the hands of the mob, but all availed him not; at length some one proposed that, as the crowd was sufficiently large to protect the stranger, a truce should be made long enough to enable him to speak to the miser through a hole in the window of the shop.

Canty was in no mood to use the mild tones that might have re-assured the trembling miser and induced him to take down his barricade; he was sore, angry, mortified, and discomfited, and he roared through the circular space for admission in a way that made old Maloney roar back his determination to shoot the first man who dared to force an entrance. Thus repulsed, the humiliated applicant was obliged to desist, and with loud, deep curses he turned his face to the car-office

followed by the rabble, the foremost of whom were shrieking in his ears: "Glory be to God that you're saved! if you listened to rayson afore it's not to all this throuble you'd be puttin' us; be thankful, man, that you kem off wid yer loife, an' niver moind the condition o' yer clothes,"—as Canty, nearing the car-office, took a hasty survey of his dilapidated person.

By this time a ludicrous side of the affair presented itself to some wag in the crowd, and a mirthful remark from him provoked a simultaneous roar of laughter. That was too much for the hitherto proud and overbearing sport,—to be laughed at by that horrid rabble, in addition to the thought of how he would ever face Tralee in his present absurd condition; he was maddened, and darted, he hardly knew whither; he had taken, however, the road to the post-office; adjacent were the public stables, and there, fortunately, he found a vehicle.

"Anywhere," he said to the driver, who was keen enough to suspect that his sorry-looking, breathless customer was the victim of some practical joke, "only get me out of this cursed place!"

He jumped into the conveyance, which immediately drove off, followed by as hearty and prolonged a cheer as ever burst from human throats. The fun of the affair now alone possessed the rabble, and some, when Tighe a Vohr's name was mentioned in connection with the origin of the trouble, were shrewd enough to see in the whole one of Tighe's wonted "divartin' thricks." That made their mirth none the less, however, and the fact that old Maloney never relaxed his fears sufficiently to take down his barricade until nearly sundown was an additional incentive to the universal merriment.

Tim Carmody, on his rapid way to Tralee in company with the priest and the two ladies, was vividly picturing to himself the whole ludicrous scene. Father Meagher had given the account of what he saw, and while the worthy priest was wondering what could be the origin of the trouble, and deploring the state of society existing among the lower class which could

cause such scandalous excitement, Tighe was coughing, wiping his face, talking to Shaun, thrusting his head out of the window, and acting in an exceedingly restless manner to suppress the mirth with which he was inwardly exploding. What would he not have given to be present at Mr. Canty's reception! and it was only on their arrival at Tralee, and the near approach of that visit to which, though Tighe himself was not to enjoy, he looked forward with anxious interest, that he became composed and serious.

CHAPTER XXVII.

CARROLL SEES HIS FRIENDS.

THE quartermaster had kept his word; unquestioned, and apparently even unnoticed, the little party of three were conducted to the cell of Carroll O'Donoghue. The iron door swung open, and they were in the presence of the prisoner. The feeble rays of a lamp revealing him with partial distinctness made him look white and worn, as, seated on his pallet, he had turned his head in anxious expectation at the entrance of the party. He sprung up, but momentary weakness, caused by the sudden joy, overcame him, and he tottered forward. Father Meagher caught him, tears of which the tender-hearted priest was not ashamed rapidly coursing down his cheeks, and Clare's and Nora's grief flowing in unison. Clare, after her first wild embrace, would bring the lamp close to her brother to note the ravages of his imprisonment; though the latter did not complete a month, the marks of that close and solitary incarceration were many and deep. Lines of suffering were worn in his face, which had become so thin and so white as to be almost transparent, while, mixed with the golden locks that waved upon his brow, Clare fancied she detected the gleam of many a silver hair. He smiled at her fond survey,—the old-time smile that was so wont to kindle his face, but which now, despite his effort to the contrary, had a sadness about it more touching than a surer evidence of grief would have been.

"I am not changed," he answered, striving to speak gayly, and drawing to a tighter clasp the hand of Nora, which he had already fondly seized. Clare put the lamp down without answering, but her passionate eyes told the opinion she would

not trust herself to utter. "Tell me how this good fortune has happened," resumed the prisoner; "I have been solitary so long that I feared I should see none of you until we should meet in the court-room on the day of my trial."

"It is due to Tighe a Vohr," responded the priest; "by what means he would not say; but we owe to him the privilege of this visit."

"Always Tighe!" murmured Carroll; "my heart has ached to see the faithful fellow. Knowing his affection for me, and his ability to accomplish almost anything upon which he determines, I half expected to see him before this; but he has given sufficient proof of his solicitude for me in contriving to bring about this visit!" and a smile of tender affection beamed on his visitors, resting longest, however, on pale, silent Nora.

Father Meagher was mentally debating the propriety of making some communication; at length he decided.

"Carroll, I have something to tell you about Morty Carter; I would put you on your guard——"

He was interrupted by Carroll hastily rising from his seat, and answering with a strange impetuosity: "Father, I beg of you to say no more; I know all you would tell me, and I implore you to spare me your recital."

It was the priest's turn to rise in astonishment from the one stool which the cell possessed, and which he had taken, while the ladies had preferred to seat themselves on the pallet beside the prisoner: "My dear boy, how could you have heard? who has told you?"

"Ask me not, father, I implore you,—it would be too harrowing; I could not bear it!"

The priest was silent, convinced that Carroll, by some mysterious means, had discovered Carter's perfidy, little thinking that Carroll had resorted to this entreaty to spare himself the pain of hearing Carter defamed when he was not at liberty to defend him.

The short half-hour allotted for the visit was almost over,

As the minutes drew to a close an insufferable weight pressed upon Nora's heart,—a feeling that in all her grief she had never before experienced, and which she was utterly unable to explain; she clung to Carroll in an agony of sorrow. It was so unusual to see her thus,—she, whose calmness, and strength, and heroic resignation fortified Clare, and even edified Father Meagher—that both pressed to her now, and besought to know the cause; Carroll himself, in the deepest distress, entreated her to tell.

"I hardly know," she said through her streaming tears; "it is as if some other trouble than this dreadful one which threatens was going to part us—a something that will make our paths in this world lie widely and forever apart."

"That cannot be," interposed Carroll, gently; "unless, indeed, you prove false to the troth you have plighted me."

A look was her only answer; a look of such affectionate reproach, and deep tenderness, that the young man never forgot it.

"Nora," he said earnestly, "though the world should change, remember that my heart can never change to you; its latest affection will be for you; should I suffer the extreme penalty, as I fear I shall do, my last sigh, my last thought, shall be of you!"

The time was quite up; the guard already at the door, and the horrible grating of the lock as it turned sounding in their ears; Father Meagher had given his blessing, and torn himself away, unable to say adieu; the distracted girls still clung to the prisoner.

"Oh, Carroll, my brother, how can I leave you!" and Clare's low, passionate sobs were vented upon his bosom. He held them both; he sought to comfort each, and when the door swung back, revealing the affecting scene to the guard, even the latter was touched; he drew back involuntarily, as if he would give them another moment.

"Go!" said Carroll, freeing himself from the frantic clasp of hands that would have held him forever; and they reluc-

tantly obeyed. From the doorway all turned to look one more adieu. On Nora that scene was burningly impressed; in after days, when a more bitter and dreadful anguish than any which had yet come upon her was searing her heart, she was to revert to that solitary figure standing in its miserable cell, with hands outstretched as if in its agony it would have called them back, and face expressive of so heart-broken a woe that her soul was wrung by it.

Tighe a Vohr awaited them outside the jail; his ardent imagination had been picturing an affecting scene, and it needed but one glance at their mournful faces to bring the ready tears to his eyes.

"Accept our thanks, my faithful fellow," said Father Meagher at the station whither Tighe had accompanied them when he learned that they would take the night car to Dhrommacohol; and the priest warmly shook Tighe's hand.

Tighe dashed the sleeve of his coat across his eyes; he could not trust himself to reply; for if he did he would have blubbered like a child. Pulling his hat over his face, he waited till the car started, and then he turned away to seek the temporary lodging which he had hired in the town. Early the next morning Tighe a Vohr, accompanied by his constant companion, Shaun, was on his way to the stable of "Brian Boru." There were four days yet before that appointed for the race, and thus far all his plans had succeeded admirably; still he was tormented by one fear,—that Carter might return home from Dublin in time to discover the imposition that had been practiced, and to spoil all Tighe's cunningly contrived schemes. Trusting, however, to the singular good fortune which rarely entirely deserted him, and which so often produced something in his favor at the very last moment, he resolved to yield no more to his fear. His resolution was strengthened when shortly after, mounted on the back of "Brian Boru," and flying over the country in true racing style, he felt all that elation of spirits which is due to a fine morning, a magnificent thorough-bred, and a stretch of

open, delightful country. Shaun with, an enjoyment of his own, entered into the sport; he could not keep up with the racer, but he gamboled through the fields, and at last waited on the road for his master's return.

Arty Moore was as civil and obsequious as Tighe could wish, and the latter dropped shrewd remarks calculated to impress Arty with the fact that Mr. Maloney had been visited by himself since the latter had brought up the horse, and how satisfied the old miser was with all arrangements.

On his return through the town with a determination of dropping in upon Corny O'Toole, he sauntered into the hall of the "O'Sullivan Arms," knowing the place to be the head-quarters of much of the sporting gossip. An excited group surrounded one of the tables, but they were talking so rapidly, and so many voices together, that for a time Tighe could not catch the drift of the eager conversation. At last he was convinced that the subject was Joe Canty.

"He is so sore about this affair that he will not ride, I tell you."

"Oh yes, he will; his indignation is somewhat spent now, and for the sake of the backers he will not withdraw at this late date."

"I doubt it; why, I tell you I never saw a more violently inflamed man than he was; good Heavens! when I think of it——," and the speaker paused to laugh loud and immoderately.

"Tell us about it!" echoed a half dozen voices; "give us the true version of the affair, for there are so many stories afloat about it that it is difficult to pick out the right one; one rumor is that he was set on by this Mr. Maloney and beaten almost to death; another, that the people of the confounded village, or whatever it is, threatened to devour him, body and bones, if he did not immediately return; and still another says that the horse, which is reported to be Mr. Maloney's bedfellow, thrust his head through a hole in the door, and so frightened poor Canty that he had to run for his life."

"Well, boys, the story which says the people of Dhrommacohol threatened to devour poor Canty is nearer the truth than any of the others. The moment he stepped from the car, and had received from a little urchin of whom he inquired full directions to Mr. Maloney's, he was accosted first by one man, asking him if he wasn't going to Mr. Maloney's, and begging him to return, as it would be as much as his life would be worth to go on; then by another, with the same story and entreaty; immediately after by a third; and so on, till he was surrounded by a howling crowd of devils, as Canty calls them; oh, Lord! it's too much!"—and again the speaker paused to give vent to loud and prolonged mirth, in which he was heartily joined. "Well, although he thought he was surrounded by a set of lunatics, poor Joe became desperate, and determined to press on; the mad rabble were as desperate, and they pressed on, too, holding on to his clothes till they didn't leave a whole tatter on his back, and howling and shrieking, till he felt like becoming as mad as themselves. Then the priest came on the scene, but as he could only stay a minute he didn't make matters much better, for the moment he was gone they set to on Canty worse than before. By this time they had reached old Maloney's place, it seems, and, worse than all, for some reason or other he had it shut up tight; then some one proposed to have Canty speak through a hole in the door, and when he did he received an answer that Mr. Maloney was waiting to shoot the first man who would try to enter. That settled the matter; poor Joe faced about for the post-office, followed again by the whole mad, howling crowd, and when he jumped into the first vehicle he could find to bear him from the scene, they set up such a cheer for the poor torn, desperate fellow, that he swears it is ringing in his ears yet, and he relieves himself by cursing Dhrommacohol, Mr. Maloney, and Morty Carter. If he knew Carter's address in Dublin he would send him a pretty stinging message."

There was another prolonged roar, in which none joined more heartily than Tighe a Vohr, who, from a safe corner,

could hear and laugh without exposing himself to unpleasant observation.

"And do you think he will ride after all that?"

"I do not," replied the man who had narrated the story.

"But I do," responded he who previously expressed himself sanguine as to the prospect of Canty's part in the race. "He'll get over this, and his backers will urge him; then he is such an excellent horseman that he can well afford to rely upon his skill to bear him through, even though he does not see the horse until the morning of the race."

"Perhaps he will make another attempt to visit Mr. Maloney."

"Not he! the very mention of Dhrommacohol is enough to put him in a cold sweat, and he'll no more set foot in that part of the country than the divil'd dip his hand in holy water."

Tighe, holding his sides, left the coffee-room. "Oh, Shaun, we fixed him—sure we laid him out beautifully! an' now we'll hurry to tell it all to Corny."

The side-splitting recital which Tighe gave to Mr. O'Toole proved a sovereign balm to the little man for the humiliation to which he had been subjected by Mr. Canty. He chuckled, and rubbed his hands, and shook Tighe's hand in congratulation, and actually, to Tighe's intense astonishment and amusement, cut pirouettes upon the floor, supposed to be the difficult steps of an Irish jig.

"Faith, Corny, if me mother could only see that, her heart'd be taken intoirely."

Whereupon Mr. O'Toole's ungainly feet executed new flourishes, until Tighe, catching the spirit of the movement, joined in the jig, snapping his fingers to the motion of his feet, and frequently giving utterance to a cheer expressive of his feelings, and the neighbors, attracted by the noise, began to collect outside the door.

"Well done, me boy!" said Tighe, stopping at last and shaking Corny's hand vigorously; and then both, tired and

breathless, threw themselves into seats, while the neighbors, hearing no more jigging, passed on, entertaining stranger opinions than ever about that odd little man, Corny O'Toole. "You'll be to the fore on the mornin' o' the race, Corny?" said Tighe.

"Of course, my boy; if it was only to see how that knave of a Canty will take his disappointment."

"But what, Corny, if ould Carther should come back afore the day o' the race; what'd become o' me?"

"Tighe, my boy, Heaven always protects its own; and you, the dutiful son of so respected a mother as Mrs. Mollie Carmody, and the truthful, upright, noble boy that you are, Timothy Carmody, who ought to be Timothy O'Toole, are the object of its constant and special protection."

Either the great and unwonted exertion which Mr. O'Toole had so recently made, or the effect of a potation that he had taken before Tighe's arrival, conspired to make his voice less steady than usual, and, as if conscious of that fact and desirous of making up for it, he nodded his head at his visitor with every word that he uttered, until at the last, entirely overcome, he dropped forward on the table and went fast asleep.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE RACE.

THE morning of the race dawned bright and clear, and Tralee, despite the excitement caused by the approaching trials of the Fenian prisoners, six of whom beside Carroll O'Donoghue were confined in the county jail, seemed to be equally excited about the coming race. All the town appeared on its way to the course ; from gigs driven tandem, to curricles, and painted jaunting cars moving on springs, family carts improvised into jaunting cars, and innocent of springs or paint, every description of vehicle was employed, and laughing faces and bright eyes looked from every one of them. The road leading to the course was crowded ; and between the sallies of good-natured drivers, the imprecations of jostled pedestrians, and the laughing repartees of some of the occupants of the various vehicles, all was a scene of happy confusion. The stand reserved for ladies and gentlemen of high social position was already full, and still each moment brought a fresh accession of gay gallants and rosy-cheeked, mirthful damsels. The Widow Moore, stout, fair, and resplendent in a light robe that set off her clear complexion and admirably displayed her fine form, was foremost among a bevy of beauties, and surrounded by a half dozen admiring masculine satellites. Garfield was there, considerably removed from her, but where his eyes could devour her. His jealousy, as he observed the gracious, familiar manner with which she accepted the attentions of her admirers, would have been more violent but that he remembered, and now fondly believed, all that Tighe had told him. He was fully persuaded that she liked him in secret, and that she was

anxious for the success of his horse in the race. And Corny O'Toole was there, in his antiquated costume, and as near the place whence the horses were to start as it was possible for him to get, in order that he might have a close view of Joe Canty's discomfiture ; already it was rumored that Canty was well-nigh insane because of the non-appearance of the animal he was to ride, and that messengers and runners were hurrying in every direction to obtain some tidings of the absent racer. A telegram had been dispatched to Mr. Maloney, but no answer had been received thus far, and it was within a few minutes of the starting time. Canty danced with passion, swearing that he was the victim of some trick, and all his backers looked blue with consternation.

"Time!" called the starter.

Everything became bustle and expectation. One by one the horses were called, and led out to their respective places, their jockeys standing beside them ready to mount.

"Brian Boru" was the last called, and a buzz of admiration followed the appearance of the magnificent steed. Timothy O'Carmody, in true, jockey style, every garment a perfect fit, and his lithe form cunningly made up to reach the required weight, stood beside him.

The horse "Charmer," not appearing, was withdrawn.

The jockeys mounted, the signal was given, and the horses started. They kept well together for the first stretch, neck and neck with even speed and equal mettle. Intense excitement and eager expectation prevailed, even among the fair sex, who, as enthusiastic as the most interested of their masculine friends, leaned forward, clapping their hands, waving their handkerchiefs, and making their own shrewd guesses as to the power and endurance of the animals. Neck and neck they flew, now one horse a head's length in front, now another badly lagging for a moment, then recovering lost ground by a sudden feat which brought him the length of a neck ahead ; but "Brian Boru" seemed to continue at the same rate of speed with which he had started, nor did his rider appear to

be making any extra effort. With a careless grace Tighe sat his horse, now stretching forward to slacken his bridle rein, now straightening himself to hold in the animal, but doing all with an easy manner which proclaimed his perfect skill and confidence. There was none of the nervous dash about him that marked his fellow riders, and his horsemanship, so easy, so apparently careless of effort, was rather calculated to make an unfavorable impression.

The horses were now on the home stretch, each animal, excepting Tighe's, spurred to its greatest endurance. On they flew, manes streaming, hoofs striking fire from the track, and riders strained to their utmost nerve. More eager, more wild, grew the expectation of the spectators—a breath might be heard ; and cheeks flushed, and bosoms swelled with the ardor of the moment.

The attention of Garfield, at last withdrawn from the widow, was tremblingly centered on the race. His heavy face was unusually flushed, and his small pale eyes shone with a singular light ; he leaned forward, clasping his hands so tightly together in his excitement that the nails sunk deep into the flesh. A half-smothered oath was on his lips as he saw "Brian Boru" drop a full length behind, and still his easy rider appear to make no effort to recover the loss.

But Tighe a Vohr knew well what he was doing ; he had not made daily trials of the horse for the past week without becoming perfectly aware of the nerve and temper of the animal, and by what peculiar means of his own he could cause "Brian" to perform unusual feats of speed. He waited till they were within a quarter of a mile of the home stakes, then with an easy flourish of his whip, a single straightening of himself in the saddle, he put his horse to its full racing power. In a short time he had distanced his competitors by a neck ; in vain the latter strove to recover their ground ; "Brian Boru's" mettle, hitherto not fully displayed, was unequaled, and in a few seconds more he came gallantly in, the winner by two full lengths.

Cheer after cheer was given: people were wild, and Tighe was speedily surrounded by a dozen or more of hearty, genial, delighted fellows who fain would have borne him in triumph upon their shoulders; while Garfield was the center of a large group of lucky bettors, each in turn shaking him by the hand and congratulating him and themselves in a breath.

Corny O'Toole was beside himself with joy. He threw up his hat, and he executed pirouettes, to the intense amusement of wandering spectators, and then, even before he would see Tighe a Vohr, he went in search of Joe Canty, who, some one said, was being held by main force within one of the booths. Corny's pleasure would not have been complete without a sight of the humbled and discomfited sport, and perhaps, also, without an opportunity of making some mockingly triumphant speech to the latter.

The report of Canty was not wrong; four of his own class were about him, seeking to detain him from rushing out madly upon the track.

"I shall shoot Carter!" he shrieked; "this is all an infernal trick to make me fail, and that fellow Carmody, whom nobody except Garfield seemed to know anything about, is at the bottom of it—he, and Maloney, and that jackass that came with the message to me the other day."

"How can that be," answered one of his friends, "when Carter and Maloney both will be heavy losers by this affair?"

Just then Corny O'Toole thrust his head into the inclosure. "The jackass'd like to congratulate you, Mr. Canty, on the success of your knavery, and to tell you you'd better spare your powder on Carter—it'll do you little good."

"Let me at him!" shrieked Canty, striving desperately to release himself, and to spring after Corny. His rage was so violent that froth issued from his mouth; but he was firmly held, and Corny O'Toole, with a mocking chuckle, disappeared as suddenly as he had thrust himself into their sight.

Excitement reigned everywhere, and on different parts of the course shillalahs and whisky had a due meed of attention.

The bettors were busy with their important interests, and Garfield was in too much demand to be able to seek the Widow Moore, as he desired anxiously to do. Now, in the flush of that success for which he fondly believed she also ardently had hoped, he thought he might venture to approach and address her; but his presence was necessary in the sporting circle whose interests were so intimately concerned with his own, and thither he was reluctantly borne by his friends.

Tighe a Vohr, now that so much had been successfully accomplished, began to think somewhat of what the consequences must be to himself. Breaking away from his admiring friends, many of whom had been astounded to recognize in the successful jockey the well-known Tighe a Vohr, and who now, in their ardent friendship, would have detained him by main force, he sought the stall of "Brian Boru," and there, attending to the horse, he encountered Arty Moore, the groom, whom he had left in the little country place where the horse had been stabled, with an injunction to remain there till he, Tighe, should return with the animal. There was a knowing look in Arty's eyes, and a boldness of manner very different from the cringing, humble air which had previously marked his deportment to Tighe.

"How dare you disobey me ordhers?" asked Tighe, with an assumption of indignant authority that would not have done discredit to Lord Heathcote himself.

Arty nodded with provoking familiarity, and returned Tighe's stare with one of equal fearlessness. Coming close to Tighe a Vohr he whispered: "I know all about it, Mr. Carmody, and it was a very clever trick indeed, you played; I have not said a word to anybody here, and I won't, providing you share halves, you know."

Tighe gave a prolonged whistle, pretending to be dumbfounded, and awed as well. "Tell me how you found it all out, Arty?"

"Well, do you see, I had a great mind to witness the race —a great mind entirely; and when you told me to remain

where I was, it seemed very hard. Besides, Mr. Carmody—you'll forgive me for saying so—but when you were so determined on my staying behind there, and not coming forward with the horse, I began to have suspicions of my own. I waited till you were well gone, and I followed. It all seemed right enough till the horse was led out as 'Brian Boru.' I knew he had been entered for the race as 'Charmer;' that opened my eyes a bit, and it wasn't very long till I heard the people talking of the dreadful state Mr. Canty was in because his horse didn't arrive, and then Mr. Maloney's name began to be mentioned; it all flashed on me, and faith I couldn't help admiring you for the clever trick you played on old Maloney. I resolved to keep my counsel, for I thought you'd be generous, Mr. Carmody."

"An' I will be, Arty," said Tighe, extending his hand, and assuming an expression as if he was just released from a shower-bath. "But the shtakes are not paid up yit, so that I haven't recaved the amount they're to give me. But can I thrust you, Arty, to help me, if I say a fair half?"

"With all my soul!" and the groom's hand clasped Tighe's.

"Well, thin, it's repoorted that a tilygraph, or some other divilmint, has been sint to ould Maloney, an' I'm afeerd o' what that'll bring foorth; now I'd loike to have the horse out o' the way, an' mesel', too. Will you run away wid the baste for a couple or three days, till I see what turn matthers will take? On the third day from now I'll mate you in Dick Courcy's shebeen, the same that stabled 'Brian Boru' for us. You can purtind to payple that you're takin' the horse to his masther—an' that'll be no lie, for so you will take him to his masther, only we'll thry first what we can knock out o' the ould miser. It'll swell our gains. Do you undhersthand me, Arty?" And Tighe looked with a wonderfully anxious gaze into the snapping eyes of the groom.

"I do, Mr. Carmody, perfectly; and I'll do it. On the third day from this, say at noon, I'll wait for you in Courcy's."

The conversation had been carried on in a whisper, but even if it were not, everybody who approached the stall was in too much haste and excitement to give it any attention.

"Away with you, thin!" urged Tighe; and it was with a smile of intense satisfaction that a few moments after he beheld the groom, mounted on "Brian Boru," riding quietly away from the course, and in an opposite direction to the town.

In one portion of the course the excitement had received a new and extraordinary impulse in the sudden appearance of a man so tall in form as to inspire awe by his unusual height, and with so sinister and repulsive an expression as to win no brief nor pleasant observation, and dressed in so dirty and strange a garb that many shrunk from his approach. He was screaming at the top of his voice, and gesticulating wildly.

"My horse! my horse! I sent him here; he was to run; somebody has stolen him!"

A crowd gathered about him, and by degrees sufficient of his story was learned for some one to volunteer to conduct him to one of the stands.

Tighe a Vohr, arm in arm with Corny O'Toole, beheld the approaching crowd—for every one who had heard the man's strange account now followed in his wake; he ventured near enough to ascertain the cause of the gathering. "Blood an' ouns! Corny, if it isn't ould Maloney! oh, where'll I go at all, at all? It's all up wid me!"

Corny became unexpectedly equal to the occasion.

"Get to my room as fast as you can,—and stay there; if they do discover enough to put the police on your track, they'll not find you awhile. I'll stay here and see how things goes."

"But they'll be afther you too, Corny; Canty'll tell how you tuk the message."

"The divil a one fear of their getting anything out of me; I'll badger them, Tighe, till they'll think they've got enough of Corny O'Toole, jackass, as Mr. Canty politely called him."

Tighe a Vohr followed the little man's advice, and was soon safely housed in the bachelor apartment, much to the delight of Shaun, who had been confined there a very unhappy prisoner since early morning. He immediately began, with the help of sundry garments of Corny's wardrobe, to endeavor to change his dress, and thus to disguise effectually his appearance.

At that same time the train which came down from Dublin brought Carter; he was in a flurry of excitement, having expected to reach Tralee in time to witness the race. He hired a conveyance, and was driven rapidly to the course. He mentally cursed Lord Heathcote, who had been the cause of his unlucky detention, and with a wildly beating heart he ordered the driver to urge his horse, that at least he might be in time for the settling of the stakes. He was met on the grounds, as he descended, perspiring and panting from the vehicle, by one of his intimate sporting friends.

"Gone—Carter—we've lost!"

"Lost!" Carter appeared transfixed; his eyes almost starting from their sockets.

"Yes; Canty's horse didn't appear, and a magnificent animal named 'Brian Boru,' and ridden by one Timothy O'Carmody, distanced all the others without an effort."

"Timothy O'Carmody!" repeated Carter in a dazed way.

"Yes; those who know him say he's always called Tighe a Vohr."

"Tighe a Vohr!" Carter threw up his hands and gasped for breath.

"It's the queerest piece of business that ever happened on a course," resumed the first speaker; "all the morning Joe Canty's been swearing and fuming like a madman, and after the race was over an old man, acting as mad as a March hare, came rushing on the course, screaming for his horse, and saying that it had been stolen. They have got him now in one of the rooms, and he declares that you sent Tighe a Vohr for the horse, which he says is the one that Canty was to ride;

and they have dispatched me to find Canty ; so you had better hurry in yourself,"—indicating the room he had just left—"and throw what light you can upon the matter."

Carter required no second bidding ; excited and panting, he soon stood amid the equally excited inmates of the betting room. On his appearance Maloney, who had been talking and gesticulating wildly, gave a shrill scream ; then he bounded toward Carter, uttering some frenzied statement, but his voice was so thick from terror and excitement that the word horse alone could be distinguished.

"Where is your horse?" yelled Carter; "why didn't he run?"

"Where is my horse?" screamed Maloney, this time a little more distinctly ; "you scoundrel, tell me where he is?" and he shook his bony fist in Carter's face.

At this juncture Canty entered, and seeing the attitude of Maloney, and fuming himself to be able to revenge his disappointment and humiliation, both of which in his blind passion he attributed to Carter, he rushed forward, and before any one could intercept or even devine his intention, planted a well-directed blow full in Carter's face. It staggered the latter, and but for the friendly support of some one in his rear he would have fallen. The friends of Carter, indignant at the outrage, fell upon Canty ; but the latter was not without his sympathizers, and they immediately assisted him in true fighting style ; Carter and Maloney, the reluctant centers of the struggle, were obliged to strike in their own defense, even though the courage of neither was of the stanchest kind. Everything became confusion and clamor ; it was the first *melee* of the day, and the hot young bloods, of that class whose chief sport seemed to be breaking heads and disfiguring faces, hailed the affair with delight. Sticks flew, chairs were overturned, and the pewter mugs, which stood on the table still reeking with the remains of Beamish and Crawford's porter, were hurled among the combatants. Maloney was knocked down, and Carter was shoved heavily upon him,

so that the frantic cries of the miser, in which the word horse was incessantly uttered, were somewhat smothered by the heavy weight. The fight speedily attracted attention without its own immediate precincts, and shortly almost every one on the course had arrived at the scene of the excitement. The police foliowed, and peace was only restored when arrests had been made of the leaders in the affair—Mortimer Carter, Joe Canty, Ned Maloney, and a couple of others who seemed to have taken the part of instigators. In vain Carter protested, saying that the fight was a mistake, and the origin of a misunderstanding; in vain Canty swore, and in vain old Maloney pleaded on his knees to be released that he might look for his horse; all were borne in triumph to Tralee bridewell, and Corny O'Toole, a spectator from a distance of the whole affair, grew so red from laughing that his yellow complexion, to which Mrs. Carmody objected, quite disappeared for the time.

CHAPTER XXIX.

TIGHE A VOHR'S SWEETHEART.

GARFIELD, and the betting circle of whom he was now the popular center, had gayly pocketed their winnings—a proceeding which might have been unpleasantly delayed had it not been for Mortimer Carter's incarceration. He was now out on bail, having been confined but a few hours; and Canty, having given surety, was also at large.

Old Maloney was not yet released, owing to his inability to procure a bondsman; he was utterly unknown in Tralee, and if he sent to Dhrommacohol he would be as little likely to find any surety there. In this despondent state he was visited by Carter, at sight of whom the old man raved like a wild beast, "My horse! my horse," his loud and incessant cry. It required time for Carter to quiet him sufficiently to gain a coherent statement; but at length he learned all: the visit of Tighe a Vohr with the note, the extraordinary tale of Canty's forthcoming arrest, the line of conduct prescribed by Tighe for the miser in the event of Mr. Canty's anticipated visit—all of which Maloney divulged now without a regard for the oath of secrecy he had taken,—his yielding of the horse and groom to Tighe, and his remaining in quiet certainty of all being right—a certainty which the fact of his receiving no visit from Mr. Canty rather strengthened. The old miser did not suspect, and the cunning rabble of Dhrommacohol, each of whom was too ardent a friend of Tighe a Vohr to disobey him in the slightest particular, did not tell him that the excitement and terror into which he was thrown one afternoon by the horde of yelling people in front of his door was due to the occasion of Mr. Canty's visit. He had no suspicion of aught being wrong until the arrival of the

telegram on the morning of the race. The contents of that, which ran :

"Your horse, 'Charmer,' has not arrived ; have you sent him ?"

and which was signed Joe Canty, put the old man into a fever. His horse not arrived, when a week ago the animal was supposed to be stabled in Tralee ! Horrible fears immediately crowded on his suspicious and sinister mind. Like a madman he locked up his abode, from which he had not been absent for years before, and took the first car to Tralee. He arrived on the course to find the race over, and that his horse was not among those in the stalls ; nor had any animal by that name been seen.

Carter was in as violent a rage as the miser ; all the more that the payment of the stakes to the fortunate winners was the occasion to him of no inconsiderable loss. Maloney's grief for his forfeit was somewhat absorbed in his greater distress for the abstraction of his horse. "It's all the doings of that devil of a Tighe a Vohr," said Carter, striding the prison floor ; "I wrote a note telling of my intended journey to Dublin, in consequence of which I should be prevented from going down to Dhrommacohol for the horse as I had promised, and bidding you bring him up yourself ; and that note I gave to a little runner at Hoolahan's, who was going down your way, to give you."

"He never came near me !" protested Maloney.

"Nor Canty ?" asked Carter, though he had already heard a second time from Maloney that there had been no visit of the sporting man to his place.

The miser answered testily : "I told you before he didn't come."

"It's past understanding," resumed Carter : "but there's nothing too big nor too bad for that infernal Tighe a Vohr : he'd go to hell to serve Carroll O'Donoghue, and I'll warrant he's had some object that was to benefit his master at the bottom of all this. At all events, we have a clear case against

him :—he obtained the horse on false pretenses, and, if it is the same animal that he entered for the race, he entered him without any right to do so ; and now it looks as if he had stolen him. I'll get out a warrant for his arrest immediately."

"And the horse ?" broke in Maloney, trembling ; "will the warrant recover him ?"

"To be sure ; if we find Tighe, the horse I think'll not be far off ; but I'll off to Canty now, and find out why he didn't go down to Dhrommacohol as he promised."

"And me ?" whined the miser ; "how long must I stay here ?"

"Be still, you old fool ! you'll be out to-morrow." And Carter hastily departed to procure a warrant for Tim Carmody's arrest, and, immediately after, to seek Canty.

Canty, not altogether convinced that he was not the victim of a trick originated by Carter, met the latter somewhat haughtily, and seemed inclined to maintain his proud and moody reserve throughout the interview. Carter explained and protested, and swore that he was as innocent of any part in the transaction, and as deeply injured, as those of the duped party, and then he retaliated by denouncing, in no easy terms, Canty's faithless omission to see the horse prior to the race ; upon which followed from the sporting man, in graphic and violently indignant language, an account of the message that was sent to him by Maloney, the messenger being described by Canty as "a little old yellow fool," and a description of his visit to Dhrommacohol, with enlarged details of the reception that was accorded him by the people of that memorable village. Carter was shrewd enough to detect in all that further evidence of Tighe a Vohr's work, and it made him more madly eager for the arrest of Tighe. Venting his rage in loud, deep oaths, he left Canty's presence, the latter at last satisfied that Carter had been as badly tricked as any one else.

Tighe, arrayed in some old-fashioned garments of Corny O'Toole's, the said garments being much too wide and too

short for their present wearer, presented a more odd and droll-looking figure than he had been wont to do in his own old costume before he exchanged the latter for a valet's outfit. He was listening with every evidence of delight to Corny's animated description of the fight on the grounds and the arrest of so many of the parties, but when Corny ceased Tighe became suddenly despondent.

"They'll make out a clear case agin me," he said, "an' they'll put me in jail: an' begorra that won't suit at all—to be losin' me toime in prison whin the masther's thrial is so near comin' off." He bowed his curly head on his hand for a moment. Corny, in deep sympathy, but unable to afford any consolation in the face of what he felt to be the truth, was silent; suddenly Tighe looked up: "Corny, jist write a bit o' a note to Carther in my name; tell him I'd loike to see him a few minits on business that's o' life an' death importhance, an' I'll run down wid it to Hoolahan's; I think I'll foind him there.'

"Sure that'll be putting your head in the trap at once," said Corny; "if you trust yourself out of here before nightfall, you'll not stand much chance of an escape from the peelers."

"I have an idea, Corny, an' it's that idea that's dhrivin' me to what I'll do; wid the help o' God, mebbe it'll come out all roight, but, for fear it shouldn't, do you kape Shaun here for a while."

At the mention of his name the dog roused from his sleepy attitude near Tighe, shook himself, and drawing closer to his master, looked very expressively into the latter's face. Tighe returned the look with one of admiring affection.

"Faith, it's supernatural sinse you have, Shaun, to be undhersthandin' ivery word I say! look at that now, Corny, the way he tuk it the minit I said his name! They say animiles have no brains, but the divil as much intilligince among some o' the two-legged animiles that have the impidince to be christenin' thimsel's min." An assertion with

which Mr. O'Toole fully agreed, and to which he certified by patting the dog very affectionately. "Write the note, Corny," urged Tighe; "it moight be as well for me to have it, in case I can't git seein' Carther at once. Niver moind bein' particler," —as he saw Corny making the same elaborate preparations as he would for the inditing of a more important epistle; "You'd be only wastin' yer book larnin' an' big words on the loike o' him—he's not worthy o' thim, Corny."

But Mr. O'Toole would not permit his literary reputation to suffer, even in so trifling an effusion as a brief note, and he wrote as follows:

"MR. CARTER:

I would like the privilege of your personal and individual presence for a few minutes; I have a communication of business to make to your private ear which is of the most valuable and highly important consequence and necessity.

TIGHE A VOHR."

"You gev him too many foine words," said Tighe, turning the note between his fingers with evident dissatisfaction; then catching sight of Corny's disappointed look,—for there was nothing which so touched the little man's feelings as disparaging criticisms of his literary efforts—he artfully added: "I was forgittin', Corny—didn't me mother once tell me as how it was onpossible for you to write anything else but foine big words, be rayson o' the great sthore o' larnin' you got in yer youth!"

Mr. O'Toole was beaming again, and explaining to Tighe the mysterious and wonderful power which a big word had of placing the writer in a very important and exalted position before ignorant folk

"Yis, but ould Carther knows well that I niver got beyant pot-hooks—an' thim same wouldn't be in me head now, only the masther dhruv thim in wid a shtick that he broke over me knuckles. How an' iver, I'll thry me luck; so good-by, Corny, an' take good care o' Shaun."

The dog, fully comprehending the situation, stood with drooped head, and tail mournfully between his legs.

"Is it to Hoolahan's you'll go now," questioned Corny.

"Sthraight, Corny; I'll walk there as bouldly as if I didn't fale in me bones that there was a *have us corpus*, or some other law thrickery, backed up mebbe be a rigimint o' the loife-guards, afther me. I'll ax for Mr. Carther, an' thin' if he's there, I'll sind him this bit o' a note, an' I'll wait for his answer; you see I wouldn't loike to face him first widout batin' him loike—dhrawin' him out, as we do whin we're anglin' for the unsuspectin' little fishes—an' I think the contints, which to me mother's moind would do you credit, Corny, will be jist the bait for Mr. Carther; he's very shrewd, an' he's very cunnin', this same ould Carther, but I carcumvinted him afore, an' I think I'll carcumvint him agin. Good-by."

He was off, whistling as he went lightly down the stair, and Shaun, mournfully resigned to circumstances which behaved so cruelly to him, slunk to a corner, whence all Corny O'Toole's enticements could not allure him.

Tighe's fears of some action of the law being issued against him were fully confirmed; within five paces of Hoolahan's spacious public house the strong hand of an officer was laid upon his shoulder, accompanied by the words: "You are my man!"

"How do you know I am?" returned Tighe, facing the policeman with the utmost coolness, and assuming his most stupid expression.

"Come, now, none o' that!" and there was a firmer grip of Tighe's shoulder; "you are Timothy Carmody, otherwise known as Tighe a Vohr." The policeman was a sharp fellow, and he knew his business; he was neither to be bullied nor cajoled from his purpose. "I have a warrant here for your arrest, and I've been watching for you all day; yes, you answer to this description,"—diving one hand into his pocket and bringing forth a folded paper, while with the other hand he still held Tighe.

"A description o' me!" echoed Tighe, in well-feigned stupid astonishment; "is it in airnest ye are?"—while the officer opened the paper. "Read it aloud, avick; I niver heerd mesel' descroibed afore, an' I'm curious to know whether they tould all about me good looks. Now do you know there was Mrs. Drumgolland that lived beyant Murranakilty, as foine a woman as iver shtepped into two shoes, barrin' she was a thrifle above the weight——"

"Hold your prate," interrupted the policeman, "and come along!"

"Aisy, man, aisy, an' don't be shakin' me out o' me clothes," —as the officer endeavored to thrust Tighe forward; "jist wait a bit, till I tell you the sthory. You won't wait?—well, thin, you're losin' a dale o' divarsion; but anyhow, shtifle yer impatience till I make mesel' persintable afther the maulin' you gev me."

And Tighe, whose object was to delay the policeman until he could gather a crowd, among whom might be some of that class whose impulsive daring is as ready to attempt a rescue of one who appeals to their sympathies as to defend themselves, began a series of maneuvers about his odd costume,—now stopping to brush the dust from his shoes, and causing the angry officer to stoop also, for the latter would not relinquish his hold for an instant; then straightening himself with a sudden jerk which sent his head into no pleasant collision with the face of his captor, and increased not a little the latter's growing indignation, and all the time talking loudly and ludicrously about Mrs. Drumgolland of Murranakilty. His scheme succeeded perfectly; a crowd was speedily gathering, much to the officer's anger and disgust. The latter would stand it no longer; he drew out his *baton* to compel Tighe to move on. Tighe clung to the railing which ornamented the entrance of Hoolahan's public house, bawling at the top of his voice and in most piteous accents: "Will you let me be murdhered b'ys, afore yer eyes—an' I the wrong man! oh, he's killin' me intoirely!" as the policeman, in a rage rendered ungovern-

able by the pushing and swaying to which he was subjected by the crowd, struck Tighe a Vohr, but without even touching him, for Tighe had a peculiar and very successful way of his own of eluding blows, no matter how well directed. The officer rattled for help; but before it arrived the crowd had forced Tighe from his grasp and covered his retreat into Hoolahan's, making it appear, however, as if he had escaped round the corner of an adjoining street; in that direction, when the aid arrived for which the policeman had signalled, all the officers hastened.

Mr. Andrew Hoolahan, the good-natured proprietor of the public house into which Tighe had been hurried, had been a witness of the scene from the first, and his sympathies, which it was no difficult task to awaken, were all in favor of Tighe, whose droll figure and still droller badinage of the officer had afforded him more than one hearty laugh.

"But they'll more than likely come back and search this place too, when they find they are unsuccessful beyond," he said to Tighe, who stood within one of the small rooms that opened from the main apartment, a ludicrous picture of wonder and dismay.

"I wouldn't moind that," answered Tighe, "purvidin' I could see Mr. Carther first. I have a note here for him, an' it tells him there's loife an' death depindin' on me seein' him."

"Mr. Carter is not here now, but I know where he is, and I can send your note to him. Let me have it,"—and the easy, good-natured Hoolahan extended his hand.

The officers were returning—they were at the very door, loud and angry parley sounding, as they seemed to encounter some opposition.

"Away with him to the kitchen," some one suggested, alluding to Tighe, "and the wimin folks there'll contrive to hide him." Tighe was hurried down by a back stair; the next instant he heard the tramp of the officers in the room he had left.

The "wimin folks" in the culinary department of Mr

Hoolahan's establishment fully sustained the reputation which had been given them, and Tighe's own artful tongue, as he told a most cunning story of touching distress, made them eager to save him. In a few moments he was arrayed in female dress, with his brown curls pushed out of sight under a white muslin cap, and he was set to work beside one of the scullery-maids, whom in an instant he had excited to fits of laughter by his droll and absurd remarks.

The search, all the more vigorously prosecuted that there seemed to be a treasonable attempt on the part of the people to defraud the law, reached the kitchen; but there was nothing in the scullery-maid, who stood, dish in hand, viewing with open mouth and great, staring eyes the whole performance, to excite any suspicion, and disappointed and discomfited, the officers were forced to leave, placing, however, a close watch upon the house.

"Begorra, we managed that beautifully;" said Tighe to the laughing women, when the policemen had retired; "an' now, if you've no objictions, I'll maintain me prisint disguise till Mr. Carther comes. I have sthrong suspicions that whin I whisper a few words in his ear he'll put a dacint ind to the whole thing." And Tighe washed dishes, and peeled vegetables, and turned his hand to the divers employments of the kitchen with such wonderful dexterity, at the same time convulsing his companions with laughter by the ridiculous stories which he told without ceasing, that one and all expressed unfeigned regret at being obliged to lose his company, when word was at length brought that Mr. Carter was up-stairs, and awaiting the person who wanted to see him. "I'll see him the way I am," said Tighe, "to divart suspicion; for mebbe it's a couple o' palers he has at his elbow to arrist me, since they couldn't foind me a while ago." And he departed in his feminine costume, his awkwardness in managing the skirts the cause of no little laughter, while he was at the same time followed by the good wishes of those of whom, during even his short stay among them, he had, by that rare winning power so natural to him, made warm and earnest friends.

Morty Carter was in a fit of ungovernable rage; he had heard the circumstances of Tighe's arrest and escape, the evidence of which was before him in the guard placed about the house, and he was maddened to think that Tighe had again overreached him, as well as amazed at Tighe's impudence in sending him a written message, the bearer of which said that the sender of the note was waiting at Hoolahan's. "You're a parcel of fools!" he said to the policemen; "the fellow's here in the house—I hold this note from him." And then he sought leisurely, amiable Andy Hoolahan.

"You ask me more than I can tell you, Mr. Carter," said Andy, who for special honest reasons of his own was not over partial to Carter. "The note was left here by some party or other to be given to you, and I sent it to you."

"But the party who left it, Mr. Hoolahan—describe him, sir," persisted Carter.

Mr. Hoolahan slightly straightened himself. "Mr. Carter, I believe you are asked in that note to meet here the person that wrote it; I'll send word that you're waiting to see the party, if you'll step beyond into that room, please."

That was the utmost Carter could gain, and inwardly fuming and swearing, he obeyed. In a few minutes there was a very timid, gentle tap at the door, and to Mr. Carter's loud and not over-pleasantly spoken "Come in!" there entered, not, as Carter fully expected to see, Tighe a Vonr, but a stout, good-looking, rosy-cheeked Irish girl, a trifle taller than the medium height, and with her hands hid in her apron. She kept her eyes down in a very bashful way, and spoke as if she was afraid of the sound of her own voice, at the same time maneuvering to get in the shadow of the room:

"I'm sint by Tighe a Vohr," she began in a voice which, though strongly affected by the brogue, was pitched too low and in too fine a key to bear an accent of resemblance to Tim Carmody's deep, rich tones.

Mr. Carter, stupefied with surprise, did not answer.

"I'm his swateheart," she continued, "an' I'm aware o' the

throuble he's in ; an' I am aware, too, o' another thing : "—she took a step forward—"I'm aware o' the docymint you gev Captain Dennier an' that Captain Crawford took on to Dublin to Lord Heathcote,—I'm aware o' all that."

Carter jumped in his horrified astonishment ; he had thought that transaction a secret between himself and the authorities to whom the paper had been delivered.

The speaker continued : "You didn't tell that to Carroll O'Donoghue whin you got to see him in the jail ; you didn't tell it to the boys beyant that thrusted you so—that wouldn't suit yer threacherous purpose ; but there'll not be wantin' others to tell thim all, onless you withdhraw this charge agin Tighe a Vohr, an' let him go free !"

"Who are you that know so much ?" demanded Carter, thrown completely off his guard by his angry astonishment and the numerous fears which suddenly tormented him. To have an entire distrust of him spring up in the Fenian circles, to some of which he was still cordially admitted as one of their stanch supporters, would hinder his future purposes ; and to have Carroll O'Donoghue told of his last treachery in furnishing such a document to the government might undo all that he had effected during his interview with the prisoner. It was under the influence of such fears as these that he turned with fierce energy to demand of the speaker who she was. But the latter had drawn back again abashed, her head down, and her hands concealed by her apron.

"Plaze, sir, I tould you afore I was Tighe's swateheart, an' it's for his sake I'm makin' bould now. If you'll let Tighe go free, I'll ingage that yer saycrets'll be safe enough, an' ould Maloney'll get his horse back ; an' be the rayson' o' that considheration, mebbe you could make the ould sinner be sathisfied too, and not do anything to Tighe for takin' his horse the way he did. Will you do all this, Mr. Carther ?"

Carter paced the room, stopping at intervals to clasp both of his hands over his face and to groan, then to cast a long, puzzled look at his visitor ; but he could make nothing of the

apparent bashful, and yet determined, young woman. "How did you obtain all this information?" he asked at last, standing before her.

"That's nayther here nor there, Mr. Carther; mebbe Tighe tould it to me, an' mebbe he didn't; mebbe me own obsarvation found out a great dale o' it, an' mebbe it didn't. But do you answer me quistion, Mr. Carther, and not be kapin' me from me work. They're waitin' for me in the kitchen."

"And what surety can you give me that my secrets will be kept? Women are not noted for their silence, and you are a woman," said Carter.

There was a low laugh from the woman in question; it startled Mr. Carter, bringing a strangely puzzled look into his face—surely he had heard that laugh before; but his visitor was saying in very earnest tones: "You'll have to take me word for that, Mr. Carther, or me oath, whichiver you loike bist; for I'll be so grateful to you for relasin' Tighe that I'd cut me tongue out afore I'd spake a word to hurt you—an' Tighe bid me say the same thing to you: he'll not revale a word if you relase him."

Again Carter paced the room. Did he refuse to yield to this proposition, the gain to him after all would be little compared to the jeopardy in which his future plans might be placed—he would have the darling satisfaction of seeing Tighe a Vohr punished, and of proving to his friends of the course how he had been the victim of a cunning trick; but, on the other hand, Carroll O'Donoghue might be made to believe him the traitor he was, and he might be ignominiously expelled the haunts to which it was his advantage to resort. His prudence counseled him to accept the terms and trust to the promise which was offered. The pledge to restore the horse to Maloney would, he felt, satisfy the old man, and prevent him making any charge against Tighe; and to his friends of the course he could pretend to turn the whole into a good joke, feigning that his innate good nature and compassion for Tighe a Vohr caused him rather to suffer his own loss than

prosecute the poor fellow. He stopped again before his visitor. "I would like to see Tighe a Vohr—to treat with himself."

"You can't, thin, until you've agreed to all I ask; for Tighe'll not come nixt nor nigh you until I give him, in yer han'writin', a pledge to withdhraw this charge immadiately, an' until you get the guard that's around this house taken away, then Tighe will come to see you."

Without replying, Carter went into an adjoining room, and speedily returned with three or four lines written on a paper, which he proffered to his visitor, saying at the same time: "I have sent up to the police barracks to have the guard taken away; and now, how soon shall I see Tighe? I must know when Maloney can have his horse."

"Wait for me here, an' I'll see if I can foind him."

She departed from the room, trying to affect a true mincing style; but there was something so awkward and constrained about her movements that, had not Carter been absorbed in reflection, with his hand to his face, he must have thought it all very strange. To Mr. Hoolahan she immediately went, proffering the paper which she had received from Carter. "Read that, plaze, Mr. Hoolahan; I'm not a very good hand at the book larnin', an' somehow the power o' undhersthandin' writin' has a fashion o' goin' out o' me head altogither."

Hoolahan, who had been breaking his heart laughing from the very first glimpse he had caught of the strange female a couple of hours before in the kitchen, and who laughed heartier now, as he looked at the quizzical expression on the strange creature's face, and felt that a very clever trick was being played on Mortimer Carter, took the paper and read:

"To the Sub-Inspector of Police:

I hereby withdraw all the charges which have been preferred by me against Timothy Carmody, otherwise known as Tighe a Vohr.

Mortimer Carter."

The strange female nodded her head with evident satisfaction. "Thank you, Mr. Hoolahan; an' now, mebbe you'd be able to inform me if he sint to have the guard taken away."

"He did that, for I sent the order for him."

"Thank you, Mr. Hoolahan, an' I'll not forgit the favor you done me this day. I'll go now, an' put on me own proper dhress, for these wimen's skirts are very onhandy to manage."

Having arrived in the kitchen, he gave an account of his success which, while it was humorous, and seemed to be straightforward and truthful, yet afforded his listeners no clew to the true facts in the case, further than that it was his playing a trick on Carter that had made the latter procure a warrant of arrest, and now it was the playing of another trick on the same gentleman which had effected the withdrawal of the warrant. The account caused successive roars of laughter, and as the women assisted Tighe to doff the feminine garments which had been put on over much of his own clothes, thus giving the apparent female a very *embompoint* look, and taking somewhat from her height, which otherwise might have been remarkable, they assured him of their regard for him, begging him to be a frequent visitor, and entreating him never to want for a meal's victuals while they were to the fore in good-hearted Andy Hoolahan's kitchen—neither himself nor any friend he might happen to have with him. Tighe expressed himself with becoming gratitude, and with hearty pressures of the hand, which became a most significant squeeze when he held the fingers of the little scullery-maid beside whom he had been set to work, he departed a second time to Mr. Mortimer Carter.

Having given the same timid, gentle knock with which he had signaled for entrance when he personated Tighe's sweetheart, and having entered with the same cast-down eyes, and bashful air, and hiding of his hands with a handkerchief in lieu of an apron, he approached Mr. Carter. A sudden light broke on the latter's mind. He recognized the air, the gait;

he identified them with those of his previous visitor, and in his discomfited astonishment he sprung from the chair into which he had thrown himself. "May the divil fly away with me if it wasn't Tighe a Vohr all the time!"

"The same, an' no liss," responded Tighe; "an' now there's no use in cryin' over spilt milk; bear up loike a man undher the difficulties afore you, an' listen while I tell you where to foind ould Maloney's horse. To-morrow at twelve o'clock be at Dick Courcy's shebeen—you know where that is; you'll mate there Arty Moore, Maloney's groom; you'd betther tell him all the villainy is found out, but that we've been pardoned in considheration o' restorin' the baste immadiately. That's all now, Mr. Carther, but, moind you, if you neglict attindin' to this"—shaking the papers he held—"for this is only writin' for it, an' I'm still loikely to be arristed till you have the charge properly withdhrawn; if, I say, you should be guilty o' such neglict as that, an' that I should fale the hand o' a paler on me shouldher agin, that insthant I'll make up me moind to discover you an' yer doin's. Good noight, Mr. Carther; may you slape aisy, an' have consolin' dhrames; an' the nixt toime don't be so ready to throw in a woman's face that she can't kape a saycret, as you did to-noight to Tighe a Vohr's swateheart."

He departed, leaving baffled, humbled, raging Carter to vent his passion in long, hasty strides and violent striking of his forehead with clinched hands.

CHAPTER XXX.

A STARTLING DECLARATION.

"It's little you have to do when you can sleep till this hour in the morning!"

The words, somewhat crossly spoken, came from Rick of the Hills, who was standing beside Carter's bed in the private lodging which the latter occupied whenever he sojourned in Tralee. Carter started up, rubbing his eyes and looking in a bewildered way from his visitor to the dull daylight which struggled into the room.

"How did you get in; and what time is it?" he asked, when he seemed to have recovered all his waking faculties.

"How did I get in? faith, easy enough; I came up here this morning and went to Hoolahan's, where you told me to go if I wanted you; but you hadn't got there yet, and a good-natured man at the counter gave me the street and the number of your lodgings; so I came here, and the girl below said you weren't up; but she showed me your room, and when I knocked and received no answer, I tried the door. It was open, and I entered—that's how I got in; and as to the time, it's twenty minutes past the dinner hour."

Carter started and looked at his watch, which he drew from beneath his pillow. It was true—that was the hour; and he sat motionless, looking at nothing in particular, and holding his watch in a vacant way. But his mind was painfully reverting to all the events of the previous day; it was due to them that his morning nap had been thus extended; for in perplexity and agony of mind, owing to his fears of what Tighe a Vohr, who had already so cleverly outwitted him, might accomplish in the future to hinder his purposes, he had

walked the floor till daylight shone through his uncurtained window, and then he threw himself, partially dressed, on the bed; he had forgotten to lock his door.

"How long are you going to stay that way?" asked Rick impatiently, as the minutes passed and Carter gave no sign of coming out of his gloomy reverie. "I came here after you," continued Rick, "to have you decide the business you want me to do at once. I got tired waiting for you to come back, and I got more tired with the craving want of my heart for Cathleen." A look of agony came into his pinched and haggard face; but it was lost upon Carter, who shook himself erect and began to finish his toilet, answering carelessly:

"Sit down, Rick, and I'll talk to you as soon as I'm dressed and the breakfast is sent up—we'll have it here—so that there'll be no greedy ears to take in what we're saying." He rung the bell, and gave an order for what sounded to his hungry visitor a sumptuous meal, not forgetting to include a bottle of whisky.

Over the meal, and after the imbibing of a glass of the liquor, Carter seemed to recover his spirits. He was particularly good natured to his guest, pressing him to eat, and frequently replenishing his glass. At length, when both had done ample justice to the repast, and both, apparently well satisfied, leaned back in their chairs, Carter said: "Well, Rick, there is only this one piece of work between you and Cathleen. If you succeed in it she shall be yours, with money and prosperity to boot. But there must be no flinching, no maudlin sentiment about the matter—you must do the task clean and well."

"I'll try;"—the response was given with a determined effort to make it calm and steady, but despite all the voice shook, and the tone had a mournful, touching cadence. He leaned across to Carter, a slight flush, caused by his rising emotion, dyeing his worn cheeks, and his eyes wearing a look from which Carter involuntarily shrunk. "I didn't think I could do it when you asked me—it went against my soul;

but Cathleen rose afore me—Cathleen as she used to be when her little arms were round my neck, and her eyes looking into mine; oh, God! I couldn't stand it——" He stopped suddenly, and dropping his head on the table, sobbed like a child.

Carter looked on unmoved.

The burst ceased, and in a few moments Rick resumed: "My heart grew so wild with longing for her that I felt I could go to hell to see her; and since no other way will touch your stony heart, Carter, I'm here to-day to engage again in your dirty work, and to sell myself body and soul to the devil for the sake of Cathleen. But how do I know"—he seemed to be seized by a sudden and horrible fear, for he sprung from his chair and stood glowering at Carter,—"that you'll not deceive me? how do I know that when I've served your purpose you won't give me the slip without keeping your promise? how do I know that Cathleen is living at all, or how do I know, oh God! how do I know"—his form shook like an aspen, and his voice became husky,—"but that when I'd find her it'd only be to hang my head for her shame and for mine?"

Carter also rose. "I have sworn solemnly to you before that your fears were all false, and I'll give you the same pledge again."

Rick laughed scornfully. "How much are your oaths worth to me, Carter? you'd take as many false ones as would make a grave mound over a coffin!"

Carter bit his lip to stifle his anger, resuming haughtily: "How much will you gain if you refuse to serve me? To whom can you apply to find Cathleen for you, and who can force me into an acknowledgement that I know of her whereabouts? I would laugh at the story, and pronounce it a mere fabrication of your own; and you know that past circumstances would bear me out in my statement."

Rick, as if he was overcome by the truth of what he heard, groaned and hid his face with his hands.

Carter continued, placing at the same moment a pound-note before his guest: "No, Rick, it's better for your own interests every way to trust me and to serve me. This affair, which will be one of my last strokes, will end the business, and I again swear to you that you shall see Cathleen, and see her well and happy. Come, drink to your future joy." He filled the glass to overflowing, and proffered it to his visitor.

That last struggling remnant of good in the poor wretch's nature urged him to repel the temptation; he had already sufficient liquor within him, and more would, he knew, make him the degraded and unresisting tool of Carter's most foul machinations; but the bait was too alluring; he drew back once in angry refusal, but the next instant he seized the glass and quaffed its contents.

Carter was satisfied, and he resumed his seat; Rick dropped heavily into his. "How soon will you——" there was a sudden pause on the part of Carter, as if he were undecided how to frame his question.

Rick looked up. "You mean to ask, I suppose, how soon I'll be ready to work up this last foul plot of yours?"

Carter nodded.

"Now—at once!" He arose from his chair, and pocketing the money which had been placed before him, began buttoning his ragged coat and planting firmly on his head a dirty, well-worn hat. At the door, with his hand on the knob, he turned to say: "Mind you, Carter, this is the last devil's work I'll do for you; and if, when it's done, you fail in your promise to me, I'll wash my hands in your blood; aye, if I have to come out of my grave to murder you!" There was a wild, desperate look in the large black eyes that made Carter draw a relieved breath when the door was fairly shut behind his visitor.

A dull, constant rain poured abroad, but beyond a slight shiver, and a closer fastening of his old coat about his person, Rick paid little heed to the storm. Indeed, it would seem from the glitter in his eyes, and the unwonted flush still on

his pinched cheeks, that some emotion within made him insensible to the uncomfortable atmosphere without. He could take the car now to his destination, thanks to Carter's recent gift, and not be compelled to make the journey, as he had done when coming up to Tralee, by begging lifts on passing vehicles, and failing that, by trudging till his feet were sore and blistered. The effect of his weary tramp was visible now in his partially limping gait, and some kind-hearted people looked after the poor wretch as if they would have gladly doled him an alms, but he asked none. It was nightfall when he reached Dhrommacohol, and the storm, which had also raged there, had abated. The stars were beginning to twinkle in the dull sky, and the air had all that refreshing influence upon the spirit which is sometimes so cheeringly felt after a storm. Something of such a feeling stole on the miserable man, who, walking slowly by the country lanes, often cast his eyes up to the now star-studded vault above him. A strange fascination impelled his glance in that direction, while the scent of the wild field-flowers came to him, and the gentle waving of the trees in the soft evening wind seemed to salute him—all conspiring to harrow his soul with memories at once sweet and heart-breaking. The big tears rolled from his eyes, but were wildly dashed away. "What is unmanning me?" he said; "why do I give way now, when I know I *must* do it?" he had involuntarily paused, and his eyes were again fixed on the sky. "Why do I look there?" he resumed; "there, where *I* shall never be! and oh, if Cathleen is there, and if she's looking at me—may be, wretched sinner as I am, she'd give me one pitying look!" He threw himself on his knees by the country hedge. "Blessed mother of God, you that have a tender heart for the poor and the distressed—pray for me!" He started up wildly: "What am I doing—*me* praying!—it'll make the devils in hell laugh to hear the like of me praying!" He strove to laugh himself—to banish the strange, softening influences which were at work about him; but his mirth sounded hollow and discordant. He walked on

quickly to Father Meagher's residence, shuddering as he approached the little chapel, and hurrying by it.

Moira, in the kitchen lightening her evening work by pleasant thoughts of Tighe a Vohr, opened to Rick's knock. "Why, Rick!" she exclaimed, "where do you come from? it's so long since you've been here!"

"I know it," he responded; "and now as I am here, and tired and hungry in the bargain, will you give me a meal?"

"To be sure, and welcome! just sit down before the fire, —the rain has made it so chilly—and I'll have a supper for you in no time." And the kind-hearted girl cheerfully bustled about the preparations.

"Don't be troubling yourself so," remonstrated Rick, "a crust and a cup of tea will do!"

But Moira, in the goodness of her heart, would make the poor fellow, whose plight was well calculated to win sympathy, as comfortable as she could, and she set before him the best that the priest's simple larder afforded.

Rick ate, asking careless questions the while about the household, ascertaining, to his private satisfaction, that Nora McCarthy had gone alone some distance to see a dying creature, and that she would probably not return very soon. By further adroit questions he won from simple Moira the precise location of the house to which Nora had gone on her charitable errand; and when he had finished his meal, and thanked his kind little hostess, he set out in the direction which he knew Nora must take on her return.

The moon was shining, and everything on the lonely country road could be seen as plainly as in the noonday sun. Not a soul crossed Rick's path until he was within sight of the house into which Nora had gone. It was one of the very humble cabins of the Irish poor, and its whole exterior proclaimed the want which might be within. He gazed at it with bitter feeling; too well he knew the poverty which existed in such places, and his bosom swelled as he thought of that government to whose oppression was due such want and woe;

but in the same instant his cheeks tingled with the flush of self-accusation and shame, for was not he the traitor who had betrayed to the authorities the hiding-place of Carroll O'Donoghue? He turned away as if in his bitterness he would depart from himself; but there was the sound of a light step on the road, and he turned back. It was Nora McCarthy; well he knew the agile grace of that slight form, and he continued to watch her as she approached him. The moonlight revealed her fully; a dark cloak enveloping her person, its hood covering her head, and the little basket in which she had carried some nourishment for the sick creature pending from her hand. On she came, fearless and apparently thoughtful, and only slightly starting when Rick sprung before her in the road. "I would speak to you, Miss McCarthy—I have been watching for you."

"Certainly, Rick; anything I can do for you? do not hesitate to tell me."

"Do you mind the last time we met, when you asked me if I was in trouble, and I told you the secret of my heart—the sorrowful secret that's been eating my life away for many a year?" his voice was husky and trembling.

"I do, Rick, I remember it all," she hastened to answer; "and I have prayed for you fervently every day since."

He bent his head forward, and whispered, as if his growing huskiness prevented his speaking aloud: "Do you mind the advice you gave me then; and would you give me the same now?"

"The same, Rick—the very same; it would be the worst of sins to change it."

"But listen once more,"—still in a trembling whisper; "it may break my child's heart to know what she does'nt at present guess;—think, Miss McCarthy—if it was your own case, what would you do?" he raised his clasped hands to her in wild entreaty.

All her soul spoke in her beautiful eyes as she answered, with thrilling earnestness: "Were it my case, I should know

a pause between this knowledge coming to me and my acknowledgment of my father. No wealth, no home, no friends should stand between us; were he an outcast from mankind he would be still my father, and I, thinking alone of the love which had never lost sight of me during all his desolate, wandering years, would bound to him, and repay him with burning affection!"

"Nora McCarthy, the case *is* your own—you are my child, and I am your father!" He stood there white and trembling,—the blood had flown even from his lips—with outstretched arms and humid eyes.

Her father! she heard like one in a dream; it was so sudden, so unexpected, so dreadful, that she could not comprehend it; and she stood there so motionless that the gentle swell and fall of her bosom as she breathed could be plainly discerned, while her face was as white as Rick's own. Her eyes were fixed with a wild, frightened look upon his face.

"I should not have told you," he said mournfully; "the advice you gave me for another is too hard for yourself to follow!" He let his hands drop and was turning away.

"Wait a moment!" She was clasping his arm with her trembling hands. "Let me think!"

Faster than the lightning's flash came a train of thoughts to her terror-stricken mind—thoughts that brought her back to the time when, on the eve of her First Communion, she learned from Father Meagher's own lips how she was a waif who had been adopted by the O'Donoghue family; that her parents were gone—gone, and not dead, had been the word used by the priest, though the impression that both her father and mother had died was somehow given to the little girl; and when she had sought to know more of her origin, she had been told simply that she was the child of humble, but honest parents. It must be so then; this man, this intemperate beggar, this outcast from all respectable society, this wild-looking being, from relationship with whom, and such relationship, her whole soul recoiled, must be her father! But no answering

instinct responded to his appeal; no strangely affectionate impulse had sprung into being at his cry—nothing but the horrible consciousness that she was the child of a man from whom she recoiled with aversion and terror. In her agony—an agony which was causing her frame to work convulsively, and sending pallor and crimson successively into her face,—her heart turned to one friend—Father Meagher; he would know; he would help her to understand this wretched mystery.

"Come home with me!" she said hoarsely, still clasping Rick's arm. "Come home, and I will tell Father Meagher."

Rick neither objected nor remonstrated, but walked on quietly by her side.

CHAPTER XXXI.

NORA McCARTHY'S SACRIFICE.

FATHER MEAGHER was in his pleasant little study, conning a Latin work which lay open before him, at intervals raising his head to address Clare O'Donoghue, who, at the opposite end of the table, was pretending to do some needlework. Her fingers plied the shining implement it is true, while the clergyman's eyes were upon her, but the moment she was unobserved her fingers ceased to move, and she yielded again to despondent thought. The good priest had observed with no slight concern her growing moody reserve, and he knew that it boded little good for her health of mind or body. For the purpose of rousing her from her melancholy, he had insisted that she should bear him company in the study until Nora's return, and he had sought to awaken her interest by recounting amusing items of the parish gossip. But a slight smile, that was scarcely such, it was so faint, was her only answer.

"Do you know what I heard an hour or so ago?" he said, shutting his book, rising from his chair, and beginning to pace the little room.

Clare had commenced her stitching again, and she seemed too intently at work to care even to raise her head.

The priest continued: "Tom Murphy at the kilns, was telling me:—it seems he has been up to Tralee for the race that took place there a couple of days ago, and some other business kept him so that he did not get home until shortly before I was speaking to him. Ned Maloney, down here, had his horse entered for that race, with some noted jockey to ride him; and Tighe a Vohr, by one of his tricks, actually got possession of the horse, rode the animal himself, and won

the race, doing Maloney and everybody concerned with the old man in the affair out of all their expectations. It sent poor Maloney nearly crazy—so much so, that he has done, for him, a most unprecedented action—closed his place, and gone up to Tralee himself. But this is not the whole of the story: Tighe was arrested for what he did, the charge being preferred by Morty Carter; but he so badgered or befooled the officer who had him in charge that he escaped, and afterward he actually found means to hoodwink or cajole Carter into withdrawing the warrant; and I believe in my heart now, since I have heard this narrative of Tighe's doings, that he was the instigator of all that rabble and uproar in front of Maloney's place last week.

"And if he was, uncle, surely you ought to forgive him for the good turns he does everybody."

It was Moira who spoke; she was entering with the cup of tea which the priest sometimes took in his study, and she overheard sufficient of the last remark to enable her to know well to whom it had reference.

"You forget yourself, Moira!" said the priest a little sternly, though he was somewhat amused at the pertinacity with which his niece insisted on defending Tighe upon every occasion.

Having set down the tea, she left the room with an appealing look to Clare, as if she would have said: "You speak in his behalf!" But Clare was too sad to respond to the look by even a smile.

There was the noise of some one entering by the back way, and an instant after, the sound of hurried steps on the stair and in the little passage which led to the study. Father Meagher opened the door, and beheld Nora so deathly pale, so wild and frightened-looking that he started in dismay.

"My child! what has happened?"

His exclamation brought Clare to the threshold.

Nora did not speak; as if her voice had left her, she caught the sontane of the clergyman, and tremblingly brought him to

the little parlor, at the same time waving back Clare, who attempted to follow. The parlor was but dimly lighted, but it was sufficiently so to show Nora's terror-stricken face as she threw herself on her knees at the priest's feet. "Father, for the love of Heaven, answer me one question—is Rick of the Hills my father?"

The priest started, and so violent was his emotion that great beads of perspiration came out upon his forehead. He did not reply.

"For the love of God, I beg you to answer! one little word, and end my horrible suspense!"

"Why do you ask?" The clergyman's voice was as quivering as her own.

"Because Rick has told me so; he claims me as his child. Oh, father, answer me—I *must* know!"

She was in no condition to be evaded, or to be calmed by anything save a direct reply, and Father Meagher gasped, rather than said: "He is!"

"Then go to him—he is down-stairs waiting to see you."

Hardly with volition of his own, so mystified, and bewildered, and pain-stricken was he, the priest obeyed. Clare met him in the hall, but he could not answer her; he pointed to the room in which he had left Nora. She rushed in. Nora was still kneeling, her face bowed on the crucifix she had drawn from her bosom, and which was the fac-simile of that worn by her betrothed. With one hand she waved Clare back.

"Leave me—let me be alone for a little while with this!" indicating the crucifix by a motion of her head; "I am not myself now—by and by, some one will tell you, but go away now—please go away!" as Clare still hesitated, ready herself to burst into passionate weeping at this mystery, which, for aught she knew, might mean some dreadful occurrence to her brother. She obeyed the earnest entreaty, however, and paced the little hall in an agony of suspense. In a few moments Father Meagher, flushed and excited, accom-

panied by an ill-formed, shambling man whom she recognized as Rick of the Hills, passed her, on their way to the study. The door was shut tight upon them; still, as she wildly walked, she could hear their excited voices, and the more harrowing sound of Nora's sobbing. "My God! my God!" moaned Nora, deluging the crucifix with her tears; "I accept it all—I unite my will with that of Thine. I begged of Thee once to inflict upon me any suffering so that Carroll would be spared—I repeat my prayer, and I accept this trial from Thy loving hands. Oh, Thou who drank to the dregs Thy cup of sorrow and shame—Thou whose heart broke in its agony, have pity upon me! give me strength, give me courage for *my* duty. Blessed mother of God, whose tender heart is never closed to the cry of the distressed, pray for me!" and scapular and crucifix were together pressed to her fevered lips.

Within the study, Father Meagher was saying to the cowering man before him: "Did you not solemnly promise when Mrs. O'Donoghue took the infant from its dying mother's arms that you would never claim it—that you would never assert your title to it in any way? And by what right did you dare to make yourself known to her now, when you did not do it before? you have not even the claim which a decent sober life might have given you. Had you been such, Rick, instead of a worthless scamp, I myself would have revealed the secret to her before this; but to tell her, she, who is almost angelic in goodness, that you,—you as you know yourself to be, Rick, without any description of mine,—were her father, would be to break her heart, as I doubt not you, by the shock you have given her, have already done. And what good is this going to do, let me ask you?"—the priest's manner became more severe—"she shall not leave her present home, nor shall you be permitted to molest her in any way."

Rick answered doggedly: "She is my child, and she is of age to judge for herself; she told me when I put the case before her as if it was another, and not herself, that were she the child I spoke of nothing should part her from her father

—that she would acknowledge him before the world, though he was a villain and an outcast."

The priest's expression changed to one of sadness and perplexity.

Rick continued, in a tone that became more full of emotion with every word: "You ask me why I claim her now, when I didn't before? I made the sacrifice long enough to let her have the home, and the education, and the friends she has, while I wandered the world with the heart within me crying for my child; may be if I'd had her all these years I wouldn't be what I am; may be if I could feel the little arms around my neck, as I once felt them, they would have kept me from many a crime! I endured it all, Father Meagher, as long as I could; I held out against this—against the impulse that was maddening me, the impulse to reveal to her who she was—till the heart within me was melting for my child. I battled with myself, and then, to satisfy my wild longing, I tested her once a few evenings ago when I met her alone. She answered as I told you; and what heart could withstand that? You are a priest of God," he continued, "and you have heard before this the story of wretched and broken hearts;—my heart is such, and you may blame me, aye, spurn me, if you will, but think while you're doing it, Father Meagher, how it's the wild, racking, burning love for my child that has done it all!" He fell on his knees, sobbing aloud.

The clergyman was deeply touched; he made two or three turns of the little study before he could subdue his emotion. "What will satisfy you, Rick?" he said at last, pausing before the kneeling man. "You surely would not wish her to leave those with whom she has been reared since her infancy—you could not, you would not dream of asking her to live with you?"

Rick arose. "I'll leave it to herself; I'll abide by what she wants: if it's to wander forth again without her, I'll go; if it's to depart from her without ever returning to look upon her face, I'll obey, because it will be her wish." He folded his arms and let his head droo forward on his breast.

Father Meagher looked at him, and for an instant he sickened as he thought of that wild, half-cleanly, sinful man being so closely allied to pure, lovely Nora McCarthy. "Remain here," he said; and he left the room, encountering the well-nigh frantic Clare.

"What is it, father? I shall go mad if you do not tell me! perhaps my brother has been already executed!"

"No, no, my poor child; it is nothing about Carroll—it only concerns our poor Nora; and now go to your room and be patient; in a little while you shall know all."

Somewhat relieved, though still a prey to keen anxiety, she obeyed, and the priest returned to Nora.

She was still on her knees, but no longer weeping; her whole attitude was strangely calm, and the face which she lifted on the clergyman's entrance—save for its pallor, which was deepened by the dark rings around her eyes, indicating severe mental suffering—bore no trace of her late emotion. She rose, and with her hand still clasping the crucifix she said quietly and slowly, but with an accent of touching sadness: "Father, I understand it all now, and my duty has become plain. He is my father, my poor, wretched father, it is true, but still my *father;* his heart has been breaking for me all these years, and it must be my task to comfort him for the future."

"You would then leave the friends who have reared and protected you—who have been more to you than this miserable parent ever pretended to be? Is this your gratitude, Nora?"

"Oh, father, you are harrowing my soul! I know, I feel all that you would say, but listen to me. Could you hear him, as I have heard him, depict his broken heart, his blighted life; and could you feel, as I have felt, that neither might have been had I, his child, whom he so loved, been with him, you would only repeat the counsel my own heart is whispering. He is now a drunkard, a wanderer, an outcast; if I, by patient, unwearied affection, can win him back, can reclaim his

soul, is it not my instant duty to fly to him? Which, father, would you have me do—spare the dear ones, who have been more than father or mother to me, and spare myself the anguish of a parting which after all will be the occasion of only a little earthly pain, or seek to reclaim an immortal soul—you, whose *life* is devoted to souls, answer me?"

The priest turned away; he was too deeply affected by the holy enthusiasm, the spirit of self-immolation which spoke in her earnest eyes, to answer her immediately.

"Speak, father!" she entreated.

He slowly faced her. "My child, have you counted all the costs? where will be your home with this poor wretch; what your means of support; how will you endure the hard, painful, perhaps ignominious life to which you may be subjected? Think well before you decide. And there are other ways by which you may discharge your duty to this miserable being. God does not require such an utter sacrifice of yourself as you desire to make."

"Nay, father;" a mournful smile broke over her features for a moment—"anything less than living with him, doing for him, comforting him, would not be fulfilling the duty which I owe him as his child—and it is for this affection that his heart has been crying all these years. You ask me where will be our home, and what will be our means of support:—a very little, humble home will suffice for us; and for our support, I can earn that—my needlework has already brought me no inconsiderable sum, and God will take care of us."

"Have you given a thought to what Carroll will say of this?"

Oh, the anguish that shone in her dry, burning eyes! the emotion that became visible in her trembling lip! for an instant it threatened to overwhelm her, and she swayed to and fro with the convulsive throes of her form. "You, father, will break it gently to him, and you will tell him to forget me. I could not, I would not, hold him to his troth now, when I know myself to be the offspring of such a parent!"

"I shall do nothing of the kind!" broke out the priest bluntly—all the more bluntly, and indignantly as well, that he might hide his own emotion; "tell him that," he continued, "to break *his* heart! and Carroll O'Donoghue is not the man to resign you because of what has occurred; besides, he is already aware that you were a little waif adopted into his family, and that your true name is Nora Sullivan."

As if she longed to end the distressing interview, she turned toward the door, saying: "Come with me, father, and I shall tell him that I am ready to acknowledge him before the world." Without, however, waiting for the priest, she hurried to the study; but at the door of the little room, with her hand upon the knob, she remained standing till Father Meagher, who had followed, reached her. Perchance she deemed his presence would help her to ward off the feeling of death-like faintness which seized her at the thought of what she was about to do. By a desperate effort she recovered herself, and with a mental prayer for strength she entered, the priest, who was unable to prevent, or remonstrate further, following.

Rick of the Hills was in the same position in which Father Meagher had left him—standing with his arms folded, and his bowed head so deeply forward that his chin rested upon his breast. The light from the study lamp fully revealed him—his coarse, abundant black hair hanging in disordered masses, his high shoulders, and his whole ungainly form. He did not look up at the entrance; he did not make a motion; and Nora, not suffering herself to pause for an instant, not suffering herself to contemplate for a moment that unkempt, miserable figure, flew to him, folded her arms about him, and cried, while her tears burst forth:

"Father! I am here to acknowledge you, to wander o'er the world with you, to pay you back love for love!"

Was it fancy on the part of the priest that, for a second, there was an actual shrinking of Rick of the Hills from that embrace: a sudden, involuntary start as if he would have

broken desperately from it? but the next moment he had thrown his arms about Nora, and his big and rapid tears were coursing with her own.

He released her gently, as gently as if she were the little babe of whom he so often spoke, whose clinging arms he was unfastening from his neck, and he put her from him, almost as if he felt some invisible barrier rising between them "Father Meagher!" He sprung erect as he uttered the name, and stood with a manliness of bearing that seemed strangely foreign to his appearance, continuing: "My soul is black with crimes before Heaven this night. I am a miserable wretch, fit only to mingle with the scum of the earth, and perhaps this last act of mine, which has torn her heart"—indicating Nora by a slight motion of his head—"and which may be the means of blighting her life, has gone up to Heaven with a bitter cry for vengeance. I say"—in his earnestness he took a step toward the priest—"it may be so; but I call God to witness it was the love for my little one that drove me to it—the little one that went from my arms with the smile on her mouth, and the bright look in her eyes—the little one that comes to me in my dreams, always a *little* one!"

It was, as he had said, always a little one; his affection seemed to be centered round the babe that he had resigned, rather than about the woman whom that babe had become—as if he could not reconcile himself to the change that time had effected. It might be due, as the deeply touched priest thought, to the fact that it was only during the period of her babyhood the wretched father had been permitted to claim and to caress her; for, though he was bound by a solemn promise not to reveal himself to her, nor to discover to others the relation which existed between them, still there had been frequent and ample opportunities, had he chosen to use them, when he might have seen and spoken to Nora. That he had not done so, now in the face of such wild affection as he evinced, was a surprise to the priest, and he listened to the unhappy man with mingled emotions of wonder and surprise.

"You blame me," Rick continued, with a desperation in his voice which seemed to tell of the last bitter throes of a broken heart, "and spurn me for what I have done; and she herself,"—again indicating Nora by a motion of his head—"when she feels the poverty and the shame of being my child, may turn against me; but God, who knows the secrets of all hearts, knows what drove me to do this, and on the last day, Father Meagher, when we are all before the Judgment Seat, perhaps in my soul, damned as it may be, you will be able to read the woe and the despair which have been my company for many a year." For an instant emotion threatened to stifle his voice, but he overcame it, and resumed: "Remember now, that I do not force her—I do not ask her to come with me; I'll wander again, childless, as I did before, and I'll not disturb her with my presence. Let her choose for herself which she will have—her father, or the friends who have been more to her than father or mother." He fell back to his first position, his arms folded, and his chin upon his breast.

Nora threw herself at the priest's feet. "You who have been my friend, my counselor, my father, do not deter me when I say that my choice is with him—do not refuse me your approval, and oh, do not deny me your blessing!" Her voice was choked with tears.

"My poor child! I beg God's blessing most earnestly upon you, and I beg Him to give you courage and strength for the hard fate you have chosen; far be it from me to seek to dissuade you from what you so earnestly deem to be your duty; but I may at least try to smooth the road before you. Go to your room now—this distressing affair has been too much for you,—and leave me to arrange matters with"—he paused suddenly, endeavoring to conceal his hesitation by a slight cough; then he resumed quickly, "with your father. To-morrow you shall know our plans."

She hesitated a moment, as if she fain would have received immediately the information of which he spoke; but the priest's face expressed too earnestly his desire for her with-

drawal. With that same quick manner and half-averted gaze with which she approached Rick of the Hills before—as if, did she allow herself a moment to think, or to contemplate him, her resolution might fail,—she now advanced to him. "Good night, father,"—her voice sunk as she uttered the last word, but with a heroic effort she instantly recovered it, and continued: "To-morrow, then, the world shall know us both." She wrung his hand, and went quickly from the room.

Clare was waiting for her; her eyes red and swollen from weeping, and her whole disordered appearance manifesting how much she had suffered from her dreadful suspense. "At last!" she murmured; "now surely you will tell me!"

Nora did not answer, but drew her gently within the room —drew her gently to an humble image of our lady placed, together with a large crucifix, on a temporary pedestal, and before which they were both wont to say their morning and evening prayers. There, kneeling, and impelling Clare to kneel with her, Nora told the wretched story. She told it without tears, without faltering, without much trace of any emotion; but the expression of her eyes, fixed on the crucifix, and her face, as ghastly as if it were already beneath the coffin-lid, seemed to deny her apparent calmness.

Clare would not believe the tale at first—it was too horrible! Nora, lovely, noble, saintly Nora, the child of such a man!—it could not be; and she burst into passionate weeping. But when she realized at last how true Nora deemed it, and when she divined piece by piece—for Nora, fearing the pain it would inflict, refrained from telling fully,—how bitter a sacrifice it would entail, she clung affrightedly to her companion, and sobbed more passionately: "Surely you will not leave us! we cannot do without you—I, at least shall go with you!"

"Hush, Clare; do not talk so wildly; it will be your task to pray for strength for me, and for repentance for my poor, wretched father." For the first time her voice faltered; she

could not pronounce that name without the most bitter emotions rising and threatening to overcome utterly all her courage and devotion.

"And Carroll," wailed Clare, "how will *he* bear this?"

The mention of him gave new impulse to the bitter and burning anguish which Nora had struggled so long to repress; it rose now in a paroxysm of agony, and it was Clare's turn to hold, and to attempt to comfort, the grief-stricken girl; she was experiencing again that uncontrollable sorrow which she had felt so mysteriously in the prison cell. She remembered it distinctly now,—that unaccountable paroxysm to which she had given such utter way, and the cause of which she had been unable to explain. This burst was as wild and deep, and she could not but feel that the former was a presentiment, a herald of the too real and lasting grief which had now begun to darken her life. "Father Meagher will tell him gently everything," she said as soon as she could speak; "he will bear to Carroll my desire to be released from my troth."

"*Released from your troth!*" repeated Clare slowly, and as if she did not understand.

"Yes," was the mournful reply; "I could not, I would not hold him to our engagement now, when I am the child of such a parent."

Clare sprung to her feet, her eyes dilated, her cheeks flushing, her whole form swelling with indignation; even her voice was quivering: "Do you think that my brother is so base as to resign you for that? when he plighted his troth to you, and received yours in return, it was for sake of yourself, Nora McCarthy, and not because of the parents you might have had. It is *you* he loves, not your origin, nor your surroundings; and you mistake the character of Carroll O'Donoghue if you think such vileness could exist in it. You have yet to learn that an O'Donoghue prizes virtue in woman far more than her pedigree." She sunk overcome by Nora's side.

CHAPTER XXXII.

CARROLL'S TRUST IN CARTER.

TIGHE A VOHR had returned punctually on the expiration of his fortnight's leave of absence to his duties as valet, and a smile of pleasure broke over Captain Dennier's grave face as he saw the bright, neat, clean appearance of his droll Irish servant. Indeed, Tighe had taken special pains with his toilet, brushing his brown hair till its gloss and curl would have been an ornament to the fairest feminine head, and arranging and smoothing his clothes upon his person, till he stood forth as neat and lithe a figure as any upon which the Englishman's eyes might care to rest. He was profuse in his thanks for the favor which had been accorded him, declared that Shaun was perfectly recovered, and in stanch condition to endure the exciting life of the barracks, and he asserted his readiness to show by his future behavior how truly devoted he was to his master's interests; all of which statements the officer received with an amused smile, though he could not forbear acknowledging to himself that he was really pleased at Tighe's return—not because of the services of the latter, for those had been as well, or perhaps even better, rendered by an English substitute, but because of that strange, undefinable something within him which constantly impelled him, despite his birth, his profession, his principles, to incline to the Irish. Perchance the bright, winsome face, which he could not entirely exclude from his thoughts, had much to do with the strange influence. Annoyed with himself, he took a hasty turn of the room, then, as if his pride would cover even that slight exhibition of mental disturbance before his servant, he stopped short, saying:

"You were away, I believe,—what part of the country were you in?"

Tighe pretended to be seized with a very violent fit of coughing. Knowing that Captain Dennier, unlike Captain Crawford, was extremely reserved, and little given to interrogating subordinates on the latter's own private matters, he was utterly unprepared for the question; he wanted time to meditate the prudence of naming Dhrommacohol. Certainly the officer had never given evidence that he recognized in Tighe any one that had been identified with Carroll O'Donoghue on the night of the latter's arrest, and determining to trust to that assurance, Tighe answered, feigning a husky tone in order to show his great difficulty in recovering his voice after the coughing spell: "I was down to see me mother in Dhrommacohol."

"*Dhrommacohol!*" the name was repeated with such surprise and interest in the tones that Tighe, who had cast his eyes down, now looked up in astonishment. "The name sounds familiar," continued the captain; "have you lived there long? do you know many of the people?"

"I've lived there since afore I was born," replied Tighe a Vohr, who, in his earnestness to impress on his listener the full length of time he had spent in the village, was unaware of the bull he was making; "and as for the people, there's not one, from the priest of the parish down to the beggar that hasn't a cabin to lie in, that I don't know."

"Then of course you know a family of the O'Donoghues—a brother and sister, I believe, and a young lady who has made her home with them."

"The O'Donoghues," repeated Tighe slowly, as if for a moment he did not quite remember; "do you mane Carroll O'Donoghue, that's held in the county jail beyant, on a charge o' trayson to the governmint? sure they're the noblest family in the whole o' Ireland. Oh! not a lady in the land, not even barrin' the Lady Mayoress hersel', could come up to Miss O'Donoghue an' Miss McCarthy for rale beauty an' goodness!

don't the poor o' siven parishes say particler prayers for thim both—the two livin' angels, as they're called, jist for the charity, an' the koind words, an' the swate looks they has always ready for poor craythurs. As for Miss O'Donoghue, she's the idol an' the darlin' o' iverybody for the spirited way she has about things."

A sudden and vivid blush dyed Captain Dennier's cheeks, causing him to bite his lip with anger that it should be so, and turning away, he dismissed Tighe to his duties with a curt, "Thank you."

Tighe a Vohr had lost neither the blush, nor the hasty and abrupt turning away of the officer; he knew, as well as did that gentleman himself, that the latter action was a pretext to hide his sudden embarrassment, and Tighe departed to his duties with a very expressive look, and an observation to Shaun on his first opportunity of speaking to the dog without being overheard, which told how shrewdly he had divined Captain Dennier's feelings.

"Faith, Shaun," said he, "there's more nor Moira an' me in love, only the quality has a quare way o' doin' their coortin' —I'll engage now, that thim two'll jist kape apart till one or the other dies o' their falins'. That's not the way o' the poor at all—they have no such things as pride an' the loike, that the rich payple do be torminted wid, to kape thim from poppin' the quistion. An' I don't know but it's the bist way, Shaun—I'd rather be mesel' as I am, wid Moira Moynahan besoide me, than king o' England wid the Indies to boot. And as for him"— indicating with a motion of the thumb the part of the barracks where he supposed Captain Dennier to be, —"I don't know about the loike o' him for Miss O'Donoghue: to be sure he's a purty dacent koind o' gintleman, not loike the ginerality o' the scurvy English at all; but he's not her koind. Faith I'm sorry he's a *sassenagh*."

And with that regret expressed very forcibly to Shaun, Tighe plied himself anew to his duties, which had been suspended while relieving himself of the foregoing remarks.

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Despite Carter's care to give his own skillfully-concocted version of the manner in which he had forfeited his stakes in the race, the story of Tighe's clever trick, with many a ludicrous addition, was in everybody's mouth, and Tighe a Vohr suddenly found himself the cynosure of many eyes, and the darling attraction of numerous ardent and impulsive hearts. In the very barracks he became the general favorite, and he was permitted almost as many privileges as the guards themselves. Garfield had become his warm and devoted friend, and there was no length to which the grateful quartermaster would not go to serve Tighe.

The fair Widow Moore had not grown a whit more encouraging in her demeanor to the ardent redcoat; on two occasions, impelled by his overwhelming desire to have her speak to him, he ventured to approach her; each time she drew herself up with coldest *hauteur*, and answered frigidly his stammering salutation, while her brother, the rake, Joe Moore, happening to be present, looked as if he would like to transfix the daring soldier. So the latter was forced to withdraw, too much abashed even to make, as he had intended to do, a whispered allusion to her letter. Tighe, to whom he hastened to tell the story of his discomfiture, sought to comfort him by saying:

"You'll spile it all if you kape on doin' thim koind o' things! didn't I tell you afore to kape out o' her sight intoirely, an' wait for somethin' favorable to turn up? A dale o' it is due to her knave o' a brother; for some rayson that's past undhersthandin' he doesn't loike a bone in yer body, an' if yer kape puttin' yersel' in his sister's soight the way you do, it's turn her intoirely agin you he will. Now, if you'll take me advice, Mr. Garfield, you'll shtay complately away from her, an' purtind to iverybody you don't care a *thrawneen* for her. Faith, that'll make her fale sore; it'll be very woundin' to her to think that you could so aisily forgit her. You know I tould you once that the Irish wimen were very quare; the divil a lie in it, for they have as many thricks an'

humors as'd turn a poor fellow's brain backwards to undhersthand. If they see a man dyin' about thim, an' ready to fall on his knees at their fate as—beggin' yer honor's pardon—some o' yer own counthrymin's given to doin', begorra it's small chance at all *he'll* have; but, if he's a man that doesn't seem to care one way or the other, that's as ready to lave thim as to sake thim, an' is bould an' indepindint all the toime, faith it's into his kapin' they'll give their fluttherin' hearts; so you see, Mr. Garfield, the coorse you ought to follow."

"I acknowledge your advice to be sound, my good fellow," answered the quartermaster, who had listened with profound attention to Tighe's remarks, "and I thank you; but my fears of orders to leave here would make me risk everything to have an understanding with her."

"Sure that'd be the viry thing!" answered Tighe a Vohr, whose own earnest desire was for the arrival of some order which would oblige the quartermaster to leave Tralee before he could discover the deception that had been practiced upon him; and it was Tighe's steady purpose to keep the man befooled until the occurrence of such a happy riddance. "Does not the varse writer, Moore," he continued, "or some o' thim other min that's called poets, say, 'it's dishtance linds inchantmint to the view?' an' it's niver so fond o' you she'll be till you're away; faith it's thin, whin she'll think she lost you be her own cruel thratemint, that her heart'll be cryin' for you out an' out, an' she'll be so glad to hear from you at all that you may safely sind one o' yer own written letther's widout waitin' to get an Irishman to compose it for you."

With which consolation Garfield was forced to be satisfied, and which advice, for lack of better, as well as for lack of courage to do otherwise, he followed.

Tighe was a fair and inspiriting singer of old Irish ballads, and sometimes he tuned and lilted for the amusement of the soldiers. But many a time, when his strain was loudest and most animated, his heart was aching, and his breast was swell-

ing with despondent thoughts of his imprisoned young master. Thus far all his wit and vigilance had not availed to open a passage for himself to Carroll's cell; and though he believed in Garfield's friendship, and felt that perhaps he might even trust the simple-minded, unsuspecting quartermaster, yet prudence constantly dictated to him the necessity of concealing his interest in the prisoner. Propitious fate, however, afforded him an unexpected opportunity. Captain Dennier dispatched him with a message to the governor of the jail, and while he waited for an answer he was granted the permission which he asked—to make a tour of the jail yard. He had already learned the side on which Carroll's cell was situated, and knew that it was the corridor which faced the yard. In true clownish fashion he sauntered about, tuning softly, as if the strain broke from him in the very carelessness of his heart. Beyond a moment's curious stare, the wardens paid him no attention. Arrived at the spot below which his master's cell was situated, he suddenly broke into a quaint old Irish ballad; it was one that Nora McCarthy used to sing, and Tighe had learned it that he too might divert the young master when both were from home, as they frequently had been, on sporting expeditions. He sung it now with his heart in the strain, and his soul praying that it might reach the ears of the dear prisoner below. It was a stirring, touching lyric, set to an air so wild that it suggested scenes of lonely mountain passes and distant sea-washed crags. The melody was so finely rendered by Tighe's deep, rich voice that the wardens forgot their surprise in their admiration, and they did not disturb him. When the song was ended he resumed his careless, clownish air, and continued to repeat his tour of the yard until he was summoned to receive the answer to Captain Dennier's message.

The strain had reached the ears of him for whom it was intended; faintly at first, still sufficient to rouse to an attitude of intensely eager attention the poor prisoner, who was sitting gloomily upon his bed. He sprung to his feet, standing upon

the pallet as close to the iron bars that guarded the single aperture his cell possessed as it was possible for him to get; but the grated space was still considerably above his head.

Louder and louder became the song, and more replete with all the passionate affection of the heart of the singer, and Carroll, recognizing the voice and the air, gave a scream of joy; but, alas! it could not penetrate beyond the walls of his prison. The floodgates of his heart were opened at this touching evidence of Tighe a Vohr's attachment, and the unmanned youth, in his gratitude and joy, cried like a child. "I knew he would find some way of getting near me," he murmured, "and to let me at least know of his presence;" and when the song was ended, he waited in ardent longing for its renewal.

The harsh sound of a key turning in his cell door broke upon his ear, and he turned almost in expectation of beholding Tighe a Vohr. It was Morty Carter—Morty Carter, with all the appearance of ardent affection and extravagant joy. He waited only to have the door tightly closed behind him, when he hastened with outstretched arms to the prisoner. "My dear, dear boy! you thought I had neglected you—that I had forgotten my promise?"

"Oh, no!" answered Carroll simply and trustingly; "I knew you would do neither; beside, I have had two gleams of sunshine since our last meeting—a visit from Father Meagher, and Nora, and Clare, brought about, I believe, by the dear Tighe a Vohr; and just now, hardly five minutes before your entrance, I heard the faithful fellow himself singing above my window here."

Carter was obliged to feign a sort of spasm, in order to conceal the confusion and excitement into which he was thrown by Carroll's statement.

"What is it, Morty?" exclaimed the prisoner in affright, while at the same time he endeavored to clasp the corpulent form, which trembled violently.

"Nothing, my dear boy! absolutely nothing," protested Carter as, feigning to recover, he wiped his face, and appeared

to make an effort to smile. "It is only one of the turns which I have frequently of late; ah, Carroll! when the heart sustains such shocks as mine has received in the undeserved coldness of friends, it would have to be adamant not to break under them some time; and it is the effect, the bitter effect, of treachery and slander that it has been my fate to endure, which you witnessed in my sudden spasm; but one day all my wrongs shall be righted."

"Yes, one day, Morty," spoke up the prisoner cheerfully, both to comfort his visitor, and to hide his own emotion; "and you will stand forth better known, better loved, than ever."

"I care not," answered Carter, mournfully, "so they leave me your affection; if you, Carroll, do not turn against me, I can face the rest—I shall have courage to bear all!"

"Have I not already sworn to you,"—and the young man in his simple earnestness caught Carter's hands and pressed them hard—"that I should ever be true? Cease to press me on this wretched subject, Morty; it harrows my soul!"

"On the occasion of the visit of which you spoke," asked Carter, "was nothing said of me—no word that might make you believe me guilty of what they report of me?"

Carroll averted his head and slightly colored; his tender heart would not inflict upon his visitor the pain which he felt a direct avowal of what Father Meagher had attempted to say might do.

Carter divined the cause of the hesitation. "Nay, tell me, Carroll—tell me frankly; it will not be a pain the more, for I am so hardened by past blows."

"Father Meagher attempted to say something, and I, suspecting from what you had previously told me what its import might be, prevented him by saying that I knew what he would speak, and I begged him to spare me the recital. How he interpreted my entreaty I know not, but all left me without saying a word more upon the subject."

That information quite elated Mr. Carter; he recovered

entirely his spirits, and burst out at once with the object of his visit: "My plan for your release is now complete; a heavy bribe has secured two of the wardens, and on the second night from this, one hour after midnight, you will find every lock unfastened between you and the jail yard; the wall of that you will have to scale, but friends will be in waiting on the outside with a rope to throw to you; and once that you are safe without the prison wall, a close-covered vehicle will bear you quickly to Hurley's, where the boys have been waiting for weeks past for an opportunity to row you out to sea; afterward, to get you safely to America will be easy work."

"Oh, Morty, how can I thank you! you give me hope, you give me life again!" In his grateful enthusiasm the young man would have pressed his lips to Carter's hand.

"Pshaw!" ejaculated the latter, drawing back, and feigning to brush sudden tears from his eyes. "You will have the nerve for the venture, Carroll—will you not?"

"The *nerve!* with life, liberty, and, above all, Nora McCarthy as the goal—what man would not feel as if he had superhuman nerve for such an aim?"

"Be on the alert at the hour appointed," Carter said at parting, while he wrung Carroll's hand.

"I shall," the young man responded cheerfully; "the stake is worth all the risks."

The cell door opened and closed, and the prisoner was again alone; but this time such renewed hope and courage animated him that his dreary abode seemed to have lost much of its gloom and irksomeness.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

FATHER AND DAUGHTER.

A STRANGELY-ASSORTED couple were hastening in the direction of Hoolahan's tavern—a shambling, ill-dressed, rough-looking man, and a plainly, but tastefully arrayed, and graceful female. A long, dark cloak covered her entire person, and her face was concealed by a thick veil; but, though so disguised, the queenly poise of her slender form, and the grace of her modest bearing, were in such singular and almost painful contrast to the ill-favored being by her side, that more than one paused to look after the pair. As they turned into the entrance of the inn she suddenly grasped her companion's arm.

"Not here; surely, not here!" Her voice quivered with pain and terror.

The man replied in a low, re-assuring tone: "Only for an hour or so, Nora; I must see the party who promised to find us a home, and I know of no place so fit to have you wait in as this."

She was silent, seeming to resign herself without further anxiety to his care. Many wondering looks were directed to her by the loungers in the room as she stood for a moment alone, while her companion went forward and spoke to some man at the counter. The result of the conference seemed to be satisfactory, for Rick returned with a pleased expression upon his face, and accompanied by the man to whom he had spoken.

"This is Mr. Hoolahan, Nora, and he will himself see that you are made comfortable until I come back."

"Right willingly, miss," responded the good-natured pro-

prietor, who had not yet recovered from the amazement into which he had been thrown by Rick's private announcement that the lady by whom he was accompanied was his daughter; and something about her, though veiled, and covered as she was, impelled him to put as great a deference in his manner as if he were addressing one of the first ladies of his native place. He continued: "I will show you to a room where you can rest after your journey—I understand you have come a little distance on the car,—and I shall see that some refreshment is sent to you."

Nora bowed, and the gentle courtesy impressed Mr. Hoolahan more strangely than before. He assigned her the best guest-chamber in the house, and thither he invited Rick, in order to assure the latter that it contained every appurtenance for his daughter's comfort. It was a prettier room than the exterior of the building seemed to warrant, and its bright carpet and freshly done-up muslin curtains looked inviting to the tired and anxious young traveler.

"It will do," said Rick, quietly, his shrewdness prompting him to conceal his pleasure, for it was not often the poor creature's eyes rested on so pretty a sight; but, by hiding his unusual satisfaction, he might cause Mr. Hoolahan to think that his guest had not always been the ill-looking, wretched-clad being that he now appeared. "You do not mind, Nora—you are not very unhappy?" Rick hurriedly whispered on the threshold, while Mr. Hoolahan, with instinctive politeness, withdrew.

Nora raised her veil. "Father!" The effort which it still cost her to say the word was manifested by the fiery color that rushed to her face. "Are not our fortunes to be henceforth together; am I not your own, your only child? why should I be unhappy?"

As if he would break from tones, and from a look that tortured him, he answered hastily, without suffering his eyes to meet hers: "I shall be back in an hour; perhaps in less time—good-by."

He shambled through the hall, and Nora, who could not yet trust herself to look after him, turned quickly into her room, and closed and locked the door.

With hurried gait Rick took his way to Mr. Carter's lodgings; that gentleman was not in, however, and Rick hastened to every haunt that seemed to offer a possibility of his presence. He met him at last, coming from the barracks, his smile and self-complacent air showing his inward good humor. His face darkened for a moment, however, as his eyes fell upon Rick, and the latter said with a scowl: "You need'nt be afeerd—there's nothing in my being here to cause you alarm. The business is settled so far that"—his voice gulped for an instant—"she's here, and I have come for your further orders."

"Hush!" said Carter, casting a hurried, half-frightened look about him; "tell me no more till we reach my room—there we shall be safe; and don't keep so close to me, Rick; fall a little behind, so that people won't know we're together."

Rick obeyed the injunction, but it was with a dogged air and a muttered: "He's ashamed to be seen in my company; but *she's* not—and I—oh, God! that I was done with it all!"

Arrived in Carter's room, the door of which that gentleman locked securely, he turned in a violently excited manner to his companion. "Do you mean that Nora McCarthy is here—in Tralee?"

"I do!" there was a fierce energy in the voice of the speaker; "I mean that she is here now in a room at Hoolahan's. I mean that she acknowledged me, when Father Meagher confirmed what I told her; she acknowledged me, and declared her intention to do her duty by me in the face of the priest's opposition, in the face of Miss O'Donoghue's tears and entreaties, and in the face of my own counsel to her to remain with the friends who had been more to her than father or mother; she braved it all. And when Father Meagher saw that nothing would move her from her duty, he

took me alone to talk to me. He begged me to make a home there in Dhrommacohol, where at least she would be in the midst of her friends. He might better have asked me to put my hand in the fire, and not take it out till it was burned to the bone. He asked me where I would take her, and I was puzzled for an answer; for mark you, Carter, I was not prepared to have her fall into my arms as easy as she did—I was not prepared to meet Father Meagher as soon as I did, but I had no power to resist her, when she said in her quiet, firm way: 'Come home with me, and I will tell Father Meagher.' I had nerved myself to meet scorn, and galling repugnance, and bitter denials of all my statements; but I had not prepared myself for the courage and sacrifice of noble Nora McCarthy!"

Carter was listening, so eager, so spell-bound, that the perspiration trickled unheeded down his face.

Rick continued: "I was puzzled, as I tell you, to know what to answer when Father Meagher asked me where I would take her, and at last I said Tralee—saying, further, that I had friends here who would help me at the least to make a decent home for her. And when I said that, oh! the hard way the priest looked at me as he said: 'Rick, it is your strange lot to possess in Nora, as your child, a gem of womanly virtue; and if you would take her from her present secure shelter to expose her in the vicious haunts which you frequent, or if you would allow her pure eyes to be sullied by one glimpse of the low company with whom you associate, God will as surely blast you as that He exists!' I'll never forget his words, Carter, they were burned in my brain; and sometimes I have started with the ringing of them in my ears. I swore to him that he need have no fear: was she not my child? and let my own guilt be what it might, could the father's heart within me expose her to any harm? He seemed satisfied, and when I proposed that she should remain a week longer as she was, thinking in the meantime to see you and have you arrange matters for us, he seemed better pleased. But the next morn-

ing, when that decision was told to Nora, she would have none of it; she would come with me immediately; whether it was that the shame of being my child made her anxious to leave at once, or the dread of the parting being harder at the end of another week than it would be then, I know not, but she carried her way. Father Meagher would have given me other clothes than these, and he would have put money in my pocket, but I refused both. They would have burned my *soul* had I taken them, so I came away as I am. I couldn't look at the parting—I couldn't look at the way the two girls clung to each other; the first sight of it was breaking my heart, and I stopped my ears to shut out Miss O'Donoghue's screams, as we turned out of the little gate, Nora and me. I would have walked before her, I would have sent her ahead I would have done anything to spare her the pain of walking beside me to the car. I might as well have told the sky to fall! I was her father, and wretched, loathsome beggar as I was, she would not abate one jot of what she deemed to be her duty. She walked beside me, Carter, not a falter in her step, and not a quaver in her tone when she answered the greeting of the country people that we met. They looked at her—everybody looked at her,—wondering to see her with me, because the news hadn't gone abroad yet; but it is known by this time. I myself told it at Hoolahan's, where she's waiting, and Andy Hoolahan was so struck with surprise when I told him that he could hardly answer me when I asked for a room where she could rest herself till my return. So now, Carter, my dependence is on you, to enable me to keep my word with Father Meagher; help me to make a decent home for her. The priest said he would not send her trunk till he should receive a letter from her telling him where and how she was situated."

Carter still only stared, mute and spell-bound.

"Are you satisfied?" asked Rick, impatient for an answer to his lengthy story.

Carter roused himself and wiped his face. "I don't know

whether to be or not," he replied, like one awakening from an unpleasant dream : "The affair has taken a different turn from what I expected—I thought you would have managed so as to offer the alternative I mentioned ; instead, you have brought the whole to a climax so quickly that you positively leave me no alternative."

Rick burst out passionately : "Have you no regard, man, for my feelings in this transaction? I was harrowed to the soul, over and over, till I could have fallen on my knees and asked God to kill me. A devil out of hell could not do a crueler thing—take her from all she held dearest to bind her life to a wretched, outcast beggar. You say I didn't mention something you told me to tell her,—I couldn't : not if a dozen bayonets were at my back pricking me with their points, and threatening to pierce me through if I didn't speak, I couldn't open my mouth to say what you told me—if I did, I felt that I should have been scorned like a worm of the earth as I am."

Carter had begun to pace the room ; he stopped suddenly, and, as if influenced by some motive of prudence, he said in a calmer and more conciliatory tone : "Very well, Rick ; I am satisfied ; and now I expect a piece of good fortune, which, should it happen, will make your reward, Rick, nearer than even I thought it to be."

"What is it?" the wretched creature was eager in an instant.

"It's this,"—Carter brought his mouth close to the ear of his listener. "I have managed a plan of escape for Carroll O'Donoghue, and to-morrow, an hour after midnight, some of the boys from Hurley's will wait for him outside the jail wall ; he's to scale that by means of the ropes they'll throw him, and then they're to drive away with him."

"Well," responded Rick, "and what then?"

"Can't you penetrate the rest?" demanded Carter : "it's too long to wait for his hanging, so I planned this."

A look of keen intelligence shot athwart Rick's features. "May be it's shot you'd have him in the attempt to escape?"

Carter nodded. Rick's head vibrated also with the full and rather startling comprehension which had dawned upon him. "And once he's completely out of the way," Carter resumed, "the rest will be easy game. And now, Rick, here's money for your purpose"—he drew out a couple of bank-notes; "Mrs. Murphy, at the end of —— street, will let you have rooms in her house; it's comfortable and respectable, and I've no doubt but that you and your daughter will be very happy."

There was a slight mocking emphasis on the whole of the last sentence; it was not lost upon Rick, but he did not pretend to notice it, only pocketed the money, saying carelessly: "You have no further business of me now?"

"No, Rick, none now; none till this affair of Carroll's is over."

The door closed upon the shambling visitor, and Carter locked it and turned to pace the floor and to indulge in one of his wonted passionate soliloquies:

"The courage and sacrifice of noble Nora McCarthy!" he repeated; "yes, it is all very well now while her enthusiasm, and the opportunity she has for a heroic display of virtue, together with the novelty of the affair, sustain her; but I'll wait awhile—I'll wait till the constant deprivation of those comforts and luxuries to which she has been accustomed begin to tell upon her; I'll wait till absence from all congenial society wears upon her; I'll wait till the disregard, and worse than that, the disgrace which will attach to her as the daughter of that outcast, Rick of the Hills, eats into her soul, and *then* will be my time." His eyes kindled with vindictive triumph. "I shall not approach her before; Rick need not fear that I shall disturb their happy home"—he laughed in mockery—"nor intrude myself upon her leisure hours; oh, no! I shall not cross her path till my time comes, and then, when Carroll O'Donoghue shall have been shot, or hung, I care not which, and she is herself stripped of everything to which her heart clung, perhaps then she will not so scornfully refuse to be-

come my wife. Oh, Heavens!" he continued, walking with more rapid strides, and speaking through his clinched teeth; "that I could crush her till her very misery would force her to accept my aid—that I could see her lying in the dust, so that her very abjectness would leave her powerless to repel me! I care not what she becomes, so that she is humbled into becoming my wife!"

And thus giving vent to the passions which ceaselessly gnawed his miserable heart, and striding as he talked, he continued till the fading sunlight warned him of the waning day, and roused him to a remembrance of other and more important business.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

RICK'S DISCOVERY.

THE hour which Rick had named to Nora as the extent of his absence had lengthened itself to two, and she had begun to be somewhat anxious for his return. She felt so strange, so desolate, so forlorn, as if only then, when left for the first time quite alone in a strange place, that the full force of the sacrifice which she had made rushed upon her. She could hear the sound of voices, and the clink of glasses, and the tramping of feet below, and from the windows of the apartment, did she choose to give more than her first passing glance, she might have witnessed the noisy confusion of street traffic; but all only served to remind her more bitterly of the quiet home, and lovely country surroundings which she had lost. She threw herself upon the bed to endeavor to sleep, for her eyes had scarcely closed the night before; but the excited tenor of her thoughts drove all tendency to repose away, and at length, having forced herself to partake of the inviting little repast which kind Andy Hoolahan had dispatched to her room, she sat down and yielded herself to a crowd of wild and melancholy thoughts.

She was aroused at last by Rick's return, and a faint smile somewhat brightened her features when he announced that he had secured their home. She departed with him, heavily veiled as she had been on her entrance, and giving to Andy Hoolahan, as she passed out, the same gentle, well-bred courtesy which had so charmed him before. They turned into one of the cross streets of the town, and suddenly there sprung from an open doorway of one of the old houses they were passing Shaun, who never forgot a friend; he jumped about

Nora with every sign of extravagant delight. Her heart bounded with joy; the sight of the sagacious animal so closely connected, through his faithful master, with him who held her dearest affections, was like a gleam of sunshine to one who had been kept long in the dark, and she put out both hands to caress the dog, feeling that his master must be somewhere near. She was right. Tighe appeared in a moment, emerging from the hall of the house in which was situated Corny O'Toole's bachelor apartment. He jumped back at least a pace with astonishment when he recognized Nora. She had thrown up her veil, and now stood with hand extended to Tighe a Vohr.

"I couldn't belave me siven sinses that it was you, Miss McCarthy!" he said half apologetically, and venturing to clasp her hand gently for a moment, while his eyes turned with new wonder to her companion. "And Rick o' the Hills!" he continued; "it bates me comprehinsion intoirely; what in the world are ye both doin' here in Tralee, an' where's the rist o' thim—Father Meagher an' Miss O'Donoghue? sure you wouldn't be thravelin' widout thim!"

"Yes, Tighe, for I am no longer Nora McCarthy, but Nora Sullivan; and this is my father." She drew Rick forward as she spoke. He held his head down and seemed unwilling to respond to her effort to draw him to Tighe, while her sudden color was the only sign of her own emotion.

Tighe a Vohr's eyes became so large that they seemed to have grown to twice their size; even his mouth was partially open to express his astonishment, and his whole face and attitude were so ludicrously indicative of terrified wonder, that under other circumstances Nora could not have refrained from laughing; now, however, her heart was too full of sorrow. "Rick o' the Hills yer father!" he repeated; "faith the world must be turning upside down!" and he actually looked about him, as if expecting to see the sky coming downward, and the earth upheaving beneath his feet. "Does Father Meagher know?" he asked, after a moment's pause,

during which he dubiously viewed Rick; "an' does Miss O'Donoghue, an' the young masther——?"

"All," interrupted Nora, quickly, "all except Carroll." The sudden anguish in her voice, telling as it did how much it cost her to utter that name, caused even Rick to glance furtively at her, and somehow, inexplicable to himself, the expression in her face smote him to the heart: perchance it revealed to him a fact which previously he had but imperfectly known, or lightly considered. Nora continued: "Father Meagher will tell him when he sees him."

Tighe turned away for an instant; with his wonted keen intuition he had divined the case—the bitter sacrifice, the noble heart of the unhappy girl,—and he had turned to hide his emotion. At length he faced Rick. "Let me say a word to you. The world has niver given you much else than the could shouldher—mebbe if it did different, you wouldn't be the poor craythur you are. I always thought an' said that there was good in you if it was only touched, an' I belave it shtill; how an' iver *God's* been good to you, to give you an angel loike this, an' oh, Rick, be good to her, an' be careful o' her, an' for her sake lave off yer hard ways, an' yer wandherin' way o' livin'!"

There was such true, homely sympathy in the tones, and such honest kindness in the clear, earnest eyes, so different from many of the tones and looks the poor wretch was wont to meet, that his heart was suddenly and mysteriously touched. He caught Tighe a Vohr's extended hand, bowed his head over it a moment, and when he released it and turned away, there glistened upon it a large, warm tear.

"And you, Tighe, what are you doing here?" questioned Nora, kindly, as Tighe a Vohr was about to depart.

"At the ould thrade,—mesel' an' Shaun gintleman's sarvints to Captain Dennier in the barracks." And shaking hands with them both he departed, turning into a secluded street that he might have a chance to relieve his feelings by a few remarks to his faithful companion. "The loike o' that,

Shaun, bates Bannagher, an' they say Bannagher bate the divil. Rick o' the Hills her father! sure it's enough to make a man shwear the moon was med o' grane chase, an' the world was hung on an illiphant's back, to belave the loike o' that! faith, I can't reconcile mesel' to it at all—thim two, that are as onloike ache other as the grizzly bears that Tom Connolly spakes o' havin' seen in Amerikay, an'——" Tighe experienced his usual difficulty in finding a simile, but he thought of one at last: "an' a noightingale; thim two to be such close blood relations. Oh, but Providince must be given to playin' divartin' thricks whin He does the loike o' that! An' the young masther—it'll break his heart complately; begorra, I'm glad I'm not the one that's to tell him, an' I hope Father Meagher will have sinse enough not to tell him ayther. He has enough to bear widout addin' insult to injury in that way." And feeling somewhat relieved, Tighe turned back into the more crowded thoroughfare, in order to pursue his way to the barracks.

Rick and Nora had arrived at the home of which the former spoke—it consisted of plainly furnished, but comfortable, apartments in Mrs. Murphy's neat little two-story house; and Mrs. Murphy herself, stout and good-natured looking, was present to assure Nora that she should want for nothing in the way of simple comfort. Nora responded to the assurance in her gentle, winning way, at the same time kindly signifying her desire to be left alone with her father.

"Do you like it?" asked Rick, in a despondent tone, as if he knew and feared what her answer would be. She surprised him by her cheerful reply.

"Certainly I do; it is quiet and plain—just what I should choose; and I think Father Meagher and Clare will be well pleased when I describe it to them."

Already she had doffed her cloak and bonnet, and was moving in her graceful way through the apartments, altering the stiff arrangement of the simple furniture, and giving fresh and pretty touches to the few ornaments, consisting of a cou-

ple of vases containing artificial flowers, on the mantel, and a pair of fancy baskets of shells pendent in the windows. There were three rooms—two sleeping chambers, adjoining each other, and opening into a large sitting-room. The furniture in the sleeping apartments was as plain as that in the outer room, but it was spotlessly clean, and Nora returned from it quite satisfied. Rick sat gazing at her with a sort of stupid wonder; her beautiful presence, his comfortable surroundings, the thought that they were all his, was like a dream, and he dreaded some rough awakening; he would not disturb it by a motion, so he sat and gazed.

"It will do nicely," she continued; "and after a little, when I have learned to earn more than will suffice for our support, perhaps we shall have prettier furniture."

The rude and sudden awakening had come. Her words sent a thrill through the form of the miserable listener. "*For our support!*" he repeated, rousing himself to an erect attitude; "do you mean to say that you would *work* to support *me*?"

"Why not?" She came and sat beside him; "are you not my father? and you are old and worn; you are too weak to labor; I told you I would repay your affection, and I shall keep my word. I am not to be outdone by your love for me through all those years, and if I am not permitted to give you affection for the length of time that you bestowed it upon me, at least I shall try to make up for it by the intensity of my filial regard."

She had learned control at last; all Rick's penetrating gaze could not discover a trace of the agony with which her heart was torn as she spoke. Rick arose; he could no longer endure his own wild emotions, and he paced the room with downcast head and moody face. Nora watched him; she had even learned that hard task, and she gulped down with a prayer every feeling of aversion which rose, as her eyes rested upon the wretched-looking being whom she called father. His mental distress appeared to increase; the contortion of

his features, the clinching of his hands, painfully indicated it. She went to his side, and put her hand on his arm. He shook it off, and started back as if her touch had stung him. Then seeing her affrighted look, he approached her and strove to soften his manner. "Nora, never, while the same roof shelters us, attempt to touch me again—it is worse than the searing of a red-hot iron, for I am too guilty a creature for your pure hands to rest upon!" She shrunk from his wild eyes, and he continued his moody walk. Suddenly he stopped, asking: "Is there an engagement between you and young O'Donoghue?"

She colored, and a lump in her throat prevented her answer for a moment. "There was."

"There *was!*" he repeated; "is it broken? which of you broke it?"

She did not reply—the words which she wanted to say would not rise beyond her throat; she could only look, but that look told Rick of the Hills sufficient.

He said slowly: "*You* have broken it, because I am your father."

She turned away, and he pressed her no more.

"I am going out," he said, when he had taken a few more turns of the room; "Mrs. Murphy will get you anything you want; and don't mind if I do not get back for an hour or two."

She could easily obey his injunction not to mind, now that she was in a quiet, secluded home, temporary though it might prove to be; and, alas for all her heroism! his absence, recoiling from him as she did, was a relief. She employed the time in writing to Father Meagher and Clare as bright and cheerful an account as she could find it in her heart to give, while Rick was on his hasty way to the barracks.

"A man to see *me!*" repeated Tighe, wonderingly, and looking at the bearer of the message with a puzzled air; "what koind o' a luk has he?"

"Faix, an ill luk enough," was the reply, "wid a gait loike a wounded game cock."

"That must be Rick o' the Hills! what in the world is he doin' here an' wantin' to see me? how an' iver, I'll soon know." He hurried to the waiting-room.

It was Rick of the Hills. "I came here for the purpose of saying a secret word to you," he said, rising on Tighe's approach, and speaking in a whisper. Tighe looked about him, then led the way to a smaller and unoccupied apartment. "Will you keep what I am going to tell you, and use it as if you got it from another source; will you promise, no matter what comes, that you'll never betray *me*, Tighe?" And Rick looked appealingly into the wondering eyes bent upon him.

"Cartinly, I'll kape whativer it is you're goin' to tell me, as sacred,—well, as sacred as the priest'd kape yer confission!"

Rick put his mouth to Tighe's ear: "To-night, between twelve and one o'clock, there is to be an attempt made to free Carroll O'Donoghue—some of the boys from Hurley's are to be outside the jail wall with a rope; this will be thrown over into the yard to Carroll, and by it he is to scale the wall; if it is in your power, do you get word to him not to leave his cell—not to make the attempt to escape; if he should, he will be either a corpse, or he will be seized again. Do you understand, Tighe?"

"I do," was Tighe a Vohr's response, while a look of keen intelligence suddenly lit his face. "I do," he repeated; "an' I thank you, Rick, for this good turn. I'll not forgit it for you, nor shall the masther, if iver he has his own agin."

"You'll never betray who gave you this information?"

"*Bethray!* I'd sooner tear me tongue out be the roots!"

Rick was satisfied, and with a brief adieu he departed. Tighe hurriedly sought Garfield.

"Misther Garfield, you gev me permission to luk upon you as a thrue frind; didn't you?"

"Certainly, Mr. Carmody; why do you ask?"

"Bekaise I've come to put yer frindship to the thrial. You

done a great favor for me once, an' I'm about to ax another o' the same koind now. Can you, be any manes at all, manage to shmuggle or stale me into the jail yard to-noight, so that I'll be there be the toime the clock stroikes twelve? moind you, it's no trayson I'm afther—it's no relase o' a prisoner I'm plottin'; it's only a little innocint business o' me own. Will you do that for me, Mr. Garfield?"

The quartermaster paused. "Well, Mr. Carmody," he answered at length, "I think I can arrange it for you. You might go on a friendly visit this evening to Ned Sutton, the warden, the same who managed the business before, when that secret visit was paid to the prisoner, O'Donoghue, and he could hide you somewhere in the vicinity of the yard till the hour appointed."

Tighe could scarcely find words to express his gratitude; in his extreme ardor he would have made some promise in the name of the Widow Moore, but fear of saying something too wide of the mark, or too ridiculous to bear a semblance of truth, checked him.

CHAPTER XXXV.

CARTER FOILED.

"It's a foine garmint intoirely!"

The compliment was addressed to Captain Dennier's cloak, and it came from the lips of Tighe a Vohr. He took it down from its place on a temporary rack, shook out its ample folds, incased his own person within it, and strode about the room with evident pleasure. It was large enough to cover Tighe's whole person, the officer being a much taller man, and Tighe a Vohr folded it about him with intense satisfaction. The material was black cloth, but it was hardly as heavy as its somber look would seem to imply, and Tighe was all the better pleased that it was entirely devoid of decoration. He took it off at last, and gave it fresh, critical inspection, the result of the latter being announced in a low-toned soliloquy:

"Somehow, it's a very dun color, an' I think it's spotted in various places"—though at the same time, to Tighe's disappointment, his eyes were telling him that the cloak was as black and as free from stains as it could well be. "Yis," he continued, "it's me bounden juty to see afther me masther's property, an' it'd be a cryin' sin to let a foine garmint loike that go to ruin for the want o' a little touchin' up. Now, there's Sandy Bevel as foine a hand at clanin' thim things as there's to be had in the four counties,—he'll do it for a thrifle, an' as he's in a disthressful way, it'd be a charity to get the bit o' work for him; besoides, on me way to Sandy's wid it, I nadn't schruple to use it a little while for me own convanience."

He awaited impatiently Captain Dennier's coming, and the

officer was hardly well within the room when Tighe confronted him with the cloak on his arm, at the same time bursting into so ridiculous and lengthy an account of the condition of the garment, and the anxiety it caused him when he realized that morning for the first time his grave responsibility regarding his master's wardrobe, that the latter burst into a heartier laugh than had passed his lips for weeks.

"When did you discover all this?" he asked, when his mirth had subsided.

Tighe answered: "Awhile ago, whin I gev the things belongin' to you a more careful luk than usual; an' me heart got sorrowful whin I kem to this, to see it spilin' the way it is;"—slightly shaking the garment as it hung on his arm;—"you see, captain, it tuk me eye intoirely, be rayson, as we say here in Ireland, o' its bein' so *flohool*,—that manes plinty—it's so loike yersel', yer honor,—big an' bountiful; an' Sandy Bevel'd have it lukin' loike new in no toime."

"Really, Tighe, I don't see anything the matter with the cloak: I have not worn it so much, and it is quite good enough;" and Captain Dennier took it from Tighe, much to the latter's reluctance, and shook out its ample folds.

"Why, beggin' yer pardon, but where's yer honor's eyes—don't you see the patch o' brown jist beginnin' to come out loike a—loike a"—Tighe experienced his usual perplexity for a moment—"loike the down on a gandher's back; an' don't you see a shpot there where the rain ketched it the noight you were out wid Captain Crawford afore he wint away; an' don't you see another shpot as if it moight be wine yer honor spilled?" Tighe's finger, moving over the surface of the cloak, was keeping time to the rapidity of his tongue; "an' don't you see——"

"Stop stop!" interrupted the officer, laughing; "I declare I see nothing of what you are so earnestly pointing out, but I suppose the upshot of it all is that you want me to have the clock cleaned by this friend of yours?"

"If yer honor'll consint to that, I'll take it as a great favor

intoirely, both on the part o' me frind, an' for the savin' o' the cloak itself."

"Very well, Tighe, do as you choose."

"An' moight I make bould to ax another favor?" Tighe was salaaming very profoundly.

The officer waited with an amused smile to hear the boon.

"I'm invoited to spind the evenin' wid Mr. Sutton, one o' the wardens in the jail, an' as he's to have a few frinds, it'll be a merry-makin' I'm thinkin', so I'd loike to get the noight off, yer honor; but I'll be back bright an' airly in the mornin'."

Captain Dennier gave the permission, and Tighe, having thanked him in his own absurd, though eloquent fashion, turned away to his duties with a somewhat lightened heart.

The evening arrived, and Tighe, with the cloak neatly parceled, went in search of Garfield; the latter kindly proffered to accompany Mr. Carmody, and together they repaired to the jail.

Ned Sutton, being himself a sociable fellow, had many of his English prejudices dissipated by the very geniality of the Irish with whom he came in contact, and having heard of Tighe a Vohr's clever exploits, he was pleased to accord him a very warm welcome. He conducted his guests to his own little private apartment, and there, over cards and whisky, Tighe proved himself the most enjoyable boon companion it had ever been Mr. Sutton's chance to meet. "I declare, Mr Carmody," he said more than once, when one of Tighe's humorous stories had convulsed him with laughter, and made the tears course down his cheeks, "you are the pleasantest fellow I have ever met, and I am happy to be acquainted with you."

The clock struck ten, and Garfield reluctantly rose to depart.

"It's too devilish bad," said Sutton," that you must go; but I don't mind so much since I shall have Mr. Carmody's company another hour or two. You say *he* can stay till twelve?"

"Yes, and then——" Garfield drew Sutton aside and told him in a low voice of Tighe's request.

"You couldn't choose a better night," responded Sutton, who was too much under the influence of the liquor he had imbibed, and too favorably impressed by Tighe a Vohr, to care to pitch his voice in as low a key as Garfield had used; consequently Tighe had little difficulty in hearing. Sutton continued: "A strange piece of business has been going on here these few days back—there's hardly a warden in the place that isn't bribed by a man they call Carter"—Tighe's hearing grew painfully acute; it seemed as if the words, though they were only spoken in an ordinary voice, were shouted in his ears—"and, what's more, there won't be a man on duty in the vicinity of the jail yard to-night."

"What's that for?" asked Garfield.

"That's more than I'm allowed to tell," replied Sutton, "and it's more than I quite understand; but you see that it's enough to satisfy you how easy it will be for me to grant your friend's request."

Garfield had a dim idea that there was premeditated treason at the bottom of the suspicious information just volunteered, and that Sutton himself was not lightly implicated in the bribery of which he spoke; and for a moment the usually slow-thinking soldier was stirred by an impulse that prompted him to warn the authorities of the plot which might be hatching under their very eyes. But in that same instant he thought of Tighe's strange request to visit the jail yard, and at such an unwonted hour—might not Tighe a Vohr himself be concerned in this mysterious affair? and to inform upon that would be perhaps to inform upon one who had already served him well, and who might again, from his extreme wit and shrewdness, be exceedingly useful. The latter thought sufficed to stifle his conscientious scruples, and he concluded to let affairs take their own turn. Bidding his companions good night, he took a hasty departure.

Jolly Ned Sutton, and the no less jolly Tighe a Vohr, grew

more convivial and more communicative; Tighe pretended to pour the strictest of confidences into the ear of the warden, and the latter in return, the more intoxicated he became, the more freely he imparted all that he knew of Morty Carter's transactions with the jail officials. By the time that the clock was on the stroke of twelve Tighe a Vohr was in complete possession of every thread of Carter's web of treachery. Sutton just retained sobriety enough to conduct his guest to a side passage leading to the yard. "You need have no fear," he said in his drunken whisper: "there's not a pair of eyes to light on you, nor won't be for a half hour yet."

The night was dark enough to throw heavy shadows in corners, but beyond the latter there was sufficient light to plainly reveal outlines, and Tighe's rapid but careful survey convinced him of the truth of Sutton's statement. He longed to venture a request to be shown to Carroll's cell, imagining that the warden was in a sufficiently maudlin condition to grant the favor; but something, he could scarcely explain to himself what, checked the asking of the boon, the words of which were twice upon his lips, and he determined to trust to some other favorable accident. Sutton departed, and he was alone. Not a sound could be heard, not a shadow crossed his vision save those that obscured the angles in the walls. He softly unwrapped his parcel, and shaking out Captain Dennier's cloak, folded its ample proportions about his person. Then removing his hat, he bent the rim in such a way that it formed an excellent cover for the upper part of his face. These arrangements satisfactorily completed, he stationed himself against a part of the wall where the shadows lay deepest, standing so motionless that he could not be distinguished from the dark mass of stone against which he leaned; and he watched and listened.

Minutes passed; they were like hours to the faithful Tighe a Vohr; he fancied he could hear the beating of his own heart, and ghoul-like forms seemed to start out of the recesses into which he sought to peer. Then alarming suspicions shot

into his mind :—what if Rick of the Hills was playing him false ; perhaps throwing *him* upon a wrong scent in order to make the infamous success of Carter more sure? But the remembrance of Sutton's information seemed to falsify his fear, and, just as he was fiercely arguing down his doubts and alarms, there was the slight noise of a carefully-opened door directly opposite to where he stood, and some one stepped quickly and noiselessly forth. Too surely Tighe a Vohr recognized that lithe, straight, bareheaded figure, standing in uncertainty and gazing upon every side of it. He sprung forward ; Carroll also, in alarm at the sudden and rapid advance of a form which he deemed to be that of an enemy, sprung back, and then recovering his presence of mind, braced himself for the encounter.

"Masther dear ! don't be afeered—it's only mesel'—Tighe a Vohr !" and Tighe flung back enough of the cloak to reveal his person.

"Tighe, my faithful fellow !" and young O'Donoghue, in the ardor of his joy, could not be content with a pressure of the hand ; he threw his arms about his affectionate follower, and strained him to his breast.

There was a sudden sound ; they sprung from each other's arms, and looked up to behold something dark falling through the air down almost at their feet ; it was a rope. Carroll hastened toward it, but Tighe intercepted him.

"Back to yer cell, masther dear, for yer loife : there's a plot afoot to capture you agin ; that's why I'm here—to purvint you thryin' to eshcape this noight."

"Why, Tighe, do you think I would disappoint the brave fellows who are waiting for me outside ?"

"Och, masther dear, *will* you listen to rayson this once, an' go back whin I tell you—the biggest danger you iver were in is afore you now !"

"No, no, Tighe, I must at least make the attempt ; let me go"—as Tighe held him,—"see, they are shifting the rope"—as the coil at their feet began to move ;—"they wonder where

I am. And I must make this venture, if only out of gratitude to him who so nobly planned all this."

A sudden light flashed on Tighe's mind, and he said in an agonized whisper: "Oh, what'll I say to Mr. Carther at all! sure didn't he lave it to me wits entoirely to get you back to yer cell, somehow? He discovered that his plan for to-noight was found out; but he discovered it too late to give you warnin' himsel', so his last depindince was on me. He didn't mane me to tell you all I'm sayin' now, for some rayson o' his own, but he lift it to mesel' to get you quietly back; sure I thried, an' you wouldn't go; but mebbe, now that you undhersthand it, you'll go!"

A light suddenly flashed from the opposite side of the jail. Tighe became desperate:

"Masther dear, will you go? be all that you iver held sacred an' howly, go—go afore you get us all into throuble, the b'ys outside'll be shot afore yer eyes, an' Carther, an' the whole o' us! Go, an' I'll climb the rope to thim."

He seized it, and was ready to swing himself aloft. Still Carroll hesitated, undecided, and puzzled.

"Fly, masther dear!" wildly urged Tighe.

"Morty Carter directed you to do all this?" Carroll said.

"Would I be here if it wasn't for his doin's?" answered Tighe, even in that moment of anxiety and suspense congratulating himself on the truthfulness of his reply.

Carroll turned back into the passage from which he had emerged, and Tighe a Vohr clambered up the rope to the top of the wall, from whence, having secured the rope round a projection of the parapet, it was no difficult task to swing himself lightly down. He was received with silent welcome by four of "the boys,"—the general term for those who were bound in that secret effort for liberty—and hurried into a close-covered vehicle which stood in waiting. His person entirely covered by the cloak, and his hat drawn carefully over his face, together with the darkness, effectually concealed his identity. He crouched in a corner of the vehicle, and immediately a voice called tremblingly forth:

"We are discovered! you took too long in getting him over the wall—they are after us! Tell Tim to drive like the devil!"

The supposed prisoner and his rescuers were all within the conveyance huddled together, and the driver whipped up the horses and dashed for the suburbs of the town. But it was too late; mounted guards pursued them, followed by armed authorities. On dashed the vehicle, on raced the guards, till a pistol shot at last felled one of the beasts, and the conveyance, brought to a sudden halt, was surrounded.

"Don't foight, b'ys," said Tighe, feigning huskiness, that his voice might not be recognized, as he saw his companions preparing to make a desperate resistance; "I'll give mesel' up." Still feigning huskiness, and careful to allow no part of his muffler to reveal his person, he cried to the first guard who, pistol in hand, thrust himself into the vehicle: "I surrinder —I'll go back pacable!"

There were twenty to one of the brave rescuers, so that resistance would have been vain; all were speedily overpowered and borne in triumph back to the jail. Tighe kept his cloak closely folded about his person, and his head bowed low on his breast; no one spoke to him, as if his very captors, exultant though they were, felt a sort of pity for his unhappy situation. Confusion and clamor seemed to reign within a portion of the prison, and where a short while before all was darkness, numerous lights now shone. Tighe, with his four companions, was hurried into an official apartment, and confronted with the violently excited and indignant governor of the jail, who stood surrounded by his assistant officers. Tighe a Vohr's disguise was torn off, and there was revealed, not the golden-haired prisoner whom all had expected to see, but a good-looking, rosy-cheeked fellow, in the garb of a valet. Amazement paralyzed everybody, so that for an instant the silence was appalling; then it was broken by an oath from some one in Tighe's rear—an odd, blasphemous expression, which Tighe a Vohr recognized as one that was peculiar to a certain person. He turned shortly, and met the wildly dis-

tended eyes and petrified face of Morty Carter, who formed one of a group of spectators standing near the door of the apartment. That unexpected, and to him horrible, vision of Tighe a Vohr—for an instant he deemed it little else—had thrown him completely off his guard, and he started forward, and uttered the oath which betrayed his presence. Tighe turned back to the astounded, and still more violently indignant governor.

"Do you call this Chresthen thratemint—to have an innocint man dhragged afore you in this way? Wait till Captain Dennier is tould o' this false arrist, an' it's coort-martialed he'll have the whole o' ye!"

Some one brought a hurried message to the governor; it had the effect of suddenly quieting him, and he turned to one of the attendant officers. "What strange business is this? the prisoner, Carroll O'Donoghue, is reported as being safe in his cell."

"Now hear me, yer worship," demanded Tighe, "an' I'll explain the whole matther;" and without waiting to be accorded the permission, he burst into an absurd and ludicrous account in which Captain Dennier's cloak, Ned Sutton, whisky, the jail yard, and a rope were so ridiculously blended, that many of the officials were struggling to suppress their laughter.

"Either the man is a fool, or he is endeavoring to play a very clever part!" said the governor impatiently, and he signaled to some of the parties about him to remove the five prisoners; Tighe found himself seized.

"Is it widout a hearin' you'd sintince me?" he cried, struggling in the hands of his captors, and suddenly twisting himself out of their grasp. Then with a bound he flung himself on his knees before the governor. "Oh, yer worship, jist sind to Captain Dennier, an' he'll shwear on the howly Bible that it's all thrue about the cloak, an' himsel', an' Ned Sutton,—he knows me intoirely, an' he'll tistify to me characther. Plaze, yer honer, sind for him, an' don't let me be thrated this way!"

Strong, rough hands had again grasped Tighe a Vohr, and he was forced to his feet; but he continued to cry:

"May the Lord be good to yer sowl, yer honor, an' don't refuse me!"

"In the morning," answered the governor, impatiently, "the affair shall be properly investigated."

So Tighe became the unwilling inmate of the jail which held his beloved young master. "Begorra," he said softly to himself when he was left to darkness and solitude, "it's a fix I'm in now, anyway; an' if Captain Dennier doesn't spake a good word for me, I don't know what I'll do at all, at all! What a foine thing that I didn't take the cloak widout his lave! faith, if I did, it's turn up it moight on me thrial, purvidin' they don't hang me widout judge or jury, an' thin mebbe I'd be charged wid stalin', the loike o' which disgrace was niver on the Carmody name yet. An' that divil o' a Carther—och, but it does me heart good to be upsettin' *his* plans! He has the masther won so complately that if I didn't tell the lie I did—God pardon me!—I'd niver get him to go back to his cell. It flashed on me all o' a suddint the minit he said he'd have to go on with the vinture out o' grathitude to some one—ould Carther was the some one, an' it's well I undhersthood how he'd niver be willin' to go back if he didn't think the ordher kem sthraight from the ould sinner. How an' iver, it's me they have for this noight's work, instead o' the masther, an' faith I'd do it all over agin for the sake o' beholdin' Carther as he luked whin I turned an' faced him awhile ago. I wondher, now, if it remoinded him o' Tighe's swateheart!" and Tighe a Vohr had some difficulty in restraining himself from laughing aloud. At last slumber sealed his eyes, and he did not awake till he was aroused by the warden in the morning.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

TIGHE EXPLAINS TO CAPTAIN DENNIER.

CAPTAIN DENNIER was surprised by an early message from the governor of the jail, and still more surprised when he found that it had sole reference to his valet. He hastened to the prison, and had a somewhat lengthy private conference with the governor.

"I do not know what to make of his story," continued the latter functionary, when he had told such portions of his ridiculous tale as he could remember; "but the four men who were captured with him disclaim all knowledge of him—they utterly deny that he had any part with them."

"Let me see him," said the officer; "perhaps I shall be able to make something of his statement."

The governor led the way, preceding Captain Dennier into his cell.

The faithful fellow had been pacing the stone floor, his face expressing the perplexed character of his thoughts. He started slightly when he saw the governor, then catching sight of the military figure just behind, he gave a scream of delight and bounded forward. "Oh, captain dear, I knew you'd come! sure I'm killed intoirely! they sazed me on false purtinses, an' they dhragged me here, an innocint man!"

"Tell me about it, Tighe," said the captain; "tell me as simply and briefly as you can."

"I will, yer honor—sure, what else'd I do but tell a simple shtory?" and Tighe feigned to be too much overcome by emotion to be able to proceed for a moment. "I kem to shpind the evenin' wid Mr. Sutton here in the jail, as yer honor gev me lave to do, if you remimber, an' I tuk yer cloak in ordher to lave it wid Sandy Bevel in the mornin' afore I'd go

home ; but we tuk a dhrop too much, Mr. Sutton an' mesel', an' we were overcome. I axed him to let me out, an' begorra it was to the jail yard he tuk me, lavin' me there alone ; it was no use thryin' to foind me way back, for the dures were all shut agin me, an' not a turnkay, nor the shadow o' any one that'd help me, could I see. All o' a suddint somethin' shot through the air an' fell jist at me fate ; I luked down an' found it was a rope ; it kem from the outside o' the wall, where the other ind o' it seemed shtill fastened, an' afther considerin' awhile, an' not seein' any one nor hearin' another sound, I med up me moind to thry what was in it. The aisiest way o' carryin' yer honor's cloak was to put it on mesel',—beggin' yer pardon for the great liberty I tuk—thin I scaled the wall to foind mesel', whin I dhropped down on the other side, taken for somebody else. I thried to tell who I was, an' to beg thim to let me go, but the darkness o' the noight, an' the excitemint, an' the hurry they were in, wouldn't let thim listen to me. Thin, whin I found mesel' dhrove off, an' the police an' the soldiers tearin' afther us, I was frightened out o' my sinses, an' I jist called out that I'd surrinder pacable. There, yer honor, is me sthory, an' if you'll only get me relase, I'll shwear to you on me two binded knees that I'll niver ax to shpind another evenin' wid any one."

Captain Dennier seemed inclined to believe the tale, not because he was impressed by its truthfulness, but because of Tighe's well-acted part of distress. "Well, well, my poor fellow," he said re-assuringly, "be patient, and we shall see what can be done for you."

"I will, yer honor, for it's well I know I can thrust to yer promise !" and Tighe courtesied almost to the ground.

Captain Dennier and the governor left the cell, both in low and earnest conversation ; and the prisoner, (though unable to distinguish a word of the whispered sounds which reached him as the two, arm in arm, passed out) with his wonted shrewdness augured favorably from the very fact of that whispered conversation ; and he was hardly surprised when, a couple of hours later, his cell door was thrown open, and he was permitted to pass forth a free man.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE TRIAL.

THE day arrived on which was to take place the trial of the unfortunate men who had been captured in the attack on the barracks, and intense excitement thrilled every heart, and manifested itself in every face. For days before the numerous friends of the unhappy prisoners swarmed the town, and cheeks blanched, and lips trembled, as the probable result was ominously conjectured. Still, an unusual confidence was felt in the able counsel who had volunteered to defend the accused, and that enthusiasm which sometimes fires the most timid now sustained hearts that perhaps on the disastrous completion of the trial would sink at once into grief and despair. It had been the topic of every household, and the animated subject of every street gathering; old and young, the stern sex and the fair, were equally exercised; and while wild and improbable stories of the number, organization, and plans of those who would make an Irish Republic were circulated,—tales calculated to make the timorous shudder, and the determined upholders of English law more resolute to maintain their principles and their government—there was at the same time an under-current of ardent sympathy inundating hearts that had no other bond with the poor captives than that evoked by commiseration for their youth and their unhappy plight.

On the morning of the trial the court-room was crowded long before the hour appointed for the appearance of the prisoners. Fair ladies, many of whom never before had stepped within the precincts of a court of law, crowded the galleries, and leaned forward with the glow and the restlessness of ardent expectation; stern-browed and fierce-eyed men min-

gled with the crowd that surged and pressed in the space without the prisoner's dock, and more than one pallid face told, by its wild and suffering expression, how life and death hung in the balance of the approaching trial. Soldiers and civilians, bailiffs and barristers, policemen and prison wardens, mingled indiscriminately, and the *elite* of the town had little barrier between them and the very beggars, some of whom had early forced their way to desirable places. The fair Widow Moore occupied a prominent position in one of the galleries, her beauty and graceful air of self-possession dimming the good looks of her fair companions; and Garfield, as was his wont on all occasions when the widow appeared, stationed himself where his eyes could constantly rest upon her. Tighe a Vohr was early there, awaiting developments which might have some bearing on his master's case; and Morty Carter, flushed and perspiring, from the effect of his corpulence and the narrow space into which he was wedged, was also present, and apparently in excellent spirits. Tighe watched him, dodging behind taller men than himself when he was in danger of being seen by Morty, and mentally wondering what could be the cause of the latter's evident self-complacency. Rick of the Hills stood on the outskirts of the crowd, frequently rising to his toes, and sweeping with a rapid look of his deep-set eyes the whole of the crowded court-room.

The prisoners were ushered in—six in number, all young, and types of a higher class than the Irish peasantry. Confinement and anxiety had made them pale and thin, and two stooped slightly, as if from the inroads of some fatal disease; but there was a fearlessness about the mien of each, a promptness in their step, and a clear, unflinching look that betokened nobleness of purpose and unfaltering courage.

After the jury had been impaneled and sworn in, the trial was opened by the reading of the indictment against the prisoners. They were charged under the treason-felony act for the planning and the execution of the attack on the barracks;

the counsel for the crown first stated their case, and called evidence in proof. Then the counsel for the defense arose. Calm, slow, but with a vigor and an eloquence which increased with every word, he described the wrongs of the poor wretches for whom he pleaded—wrongs which had their first bitter origin in the oppression that made Ireland little better than the charnel-house of her native people; in language that drew tears from sterner eyes than are given to weeping, he depicted the sufferings of the accused—the impulse, born of despair, which drove them to their last frantic stroke for that liberty which is the innate heritage of each of God's creatures.

"Look," he said, turning and pointing with a masterly gesture to the prisoners, "at those pallid faces, where Suffering has left her mark, and those attenuated forms, on which Want has laid her bony hand! Remember the youth of the accused, and the feelings which must accompany such a youth, oppressed, enslaved as it was, and then ask yourselves, gentlemen of the jury, what heart could have withstood the temptation to strike that blow which, if successful, promised at least an amelioration of their condition. There is no proof," he continued, turning back to his first position, that the youthful prisoners at the bar were the leaders in this attack on the barracks; there is no *proof* that they were even connected with this Irish Republic organization prior to this attack; but there *is proof* that they were influenced by older men than themselves, that they were hurried into the act for which they now stand accused by the impulsive and unthinking ardor of sudden feeling. This then, gentlemen, is their first offense—if, indeed, it can be called such, being utterly unpremeditated,—and the court will deal lightly, for the sake of that justice which is her noble prerogative, and her rightful boast."

He sat down, and witnesses were called for the defense. Then one of the counsel for the prosecution arose, and in a masterly manner spoke in reply to the defense set up; one by one defenses which seemed to have been firmly established were ruthlessly demolished, facts were presented in a dam-

aging light, and the whole structure of the evidence so skillfully brought forward in favor of the prisoners seemed to be swept completely away. Still there was hope: there was not sufficient proof to sustain the blackest aspect of the case, and wildly anxious hearts beat a little more hopefully as he added, after a stern and telling reiteration of the guilt of the prisoners: "One link alone is wanting in the evidence—the arrival of a certain paper which it is reported would substantiate every charge against the accused. For some unaccountable reason it is not here."

He paused as if to take breath, and Tighe stole a look at Carter; the latter was staring at the counsel as if he thought that gentleman, or himself, or possibly both together, had gone suddenly mad. At that instant one of the clerks of the court entered in great haste and put a small packet before the speaker. He glanced at the superscription without lifting it, his face kindling with pleasure. Then he said:

"The paper of which I spoke has just arrived; it's coming is most opportune, and now it is in my power to prove beyond the possibility of doubt the guilt of the prisoners." He broke the seal, and whether in the haste of his triumph, or because of his perfect confidence in the supposed contents of the paper, he did not even glance his eye over it before he read it aloud—not even pausing when the first ridiculous words had passed his lips, as if he thought they might be only some absurd preliminary to the information which he would certainly reach further on. With the same sonorous ring that had characterized his voice from the beginning, he electrified the whole assembled court by reading:

"'DARLING, CHARMING MISTRESS MOORE:

You have been the light of my eyes since I met you, and the pulse of my heart. Without any animadversion, I may say that in all the circumlocutions of poetry and logic there is nothing so supereminently perfect found on the face of the globe as the charming Widow Moore. The beaming light of the sun grows dark when you are not in my presence, and the circumlocutions of my palpi-

tating heart no longer go on when your smile is not before me. Like a rose that kisses the morning dew, and a bee that sips from the fairest flower, consider me, darling, charming Mistress Moore,

Your undivided and undividable lover,
WILLIAM H. GARFIELD,
of her Majesty's —— Reg't.'"

There was a scream from the gallery, and immediately after the wildest commotion existed about the Widow Moore, who had fainted in the arms of one of her companions; at the same time a shout of laughter, so hearty and prolonged that it seemed to shake the building, burst from every throat save those of Garfield and Carter. The former, when the full comprehension of the ludicrous, but to him disastrous incident, broke upon his mind, darted one glance of agony in the direction of the insensible widow, swore wildly, and dashed from the court-room, elbowing his way so fiercely that the crowd fell back in some trepidation before him. Carter raged and cursed so loudly and so profoundly that the people in his immediate vicinity, who were all in convulsions of laughter, began to think he had gone suddenly mad. He felt that he should indeed become speedily insane if he remained another moment within hearing of that mirth, and he too forced his way out, while judge and jury, lawyers and officers, soldiers and civilians, laughed till the tears mingled with the perspiration which coursed down their faces. It was a scene of the merriest uproar; in vain the clerk called for order—people were yet too vividly impressed with the ridiculous document just read, and for which so much had been boastingly promised, and no sooner was quiet partially restored than some burst from another part of the room would renew the whole mirthful explosion. It was impossible to proceed, and the court adjourned.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

CARTER DELUDED.

TIGHE A VOHR, with Shaun at his heels, was pursuing his rapid way to Corny O'Toole's abode. Frequently, however, he slackened his pace, as some sudden and pertinent thought gave him the occasion for a pithy remark; and when at length he stood within the little bachelor apartment, it was to cut such capers in his delight—throwing up his hat and executing fancy steps which surpassed Corny's accomplishment as a dancer—as so astonished Mr. O'Toole that he could not find voice to ask an explanation; and Shaun seemed equally surprised and puzzled by his master's strange conduct. "Wait till I tell you," said Tighe at last, when he had thrown up his heels in a final extraordinary caper, and flung himself into a chair. "It's the natest piece o' work you iver heerd tell av, Corny; it bates iverything! Oh, but I was the sorry man that you weren't to the fore yestherday in the coort!"

"I couldn't go, Tighe," answered Mr. O'Toole ruefully; "I had Mrs. McGilligan's letter to her landlord to write, and I had a proposal of marriage to compose for *Shaun* Carberry: he wanted to make an offer of himself to Judy McGerrity, and as I knew she'd be coming for me to write an answer of acceptance, I thought I'd do the whole at once. So I have Judy's letter here waiting for her, and it's as fine a piece of composition as ever I wrote, Tighe."

"No doubt o' it, Corny; you know me mother used to say that she tuk great pleasure in hearin' one o' yer illigint letthers read—there was such divarsion in thim. But listen, Corny, while I tell you about yestherday—faith, it bates intoirely the row they had the other noight, whin they found it was mesel'

that had eshcaped from the jail instead o' the young masther. You moind all about that, Corny, an' how I tould you ould Carther luked whin they pulled the cloak off me, an' lift me full in his soight?"

"I do, Tighe!" and the little man chuckled gleefully at the remembrance.

"Begorra, thin," resumed Tighe a Vohr, "if the ould villain luked loike one madman that noight, he luked loike tin madmin yestherday!" and thereupon Tighe gave, in his own graphic and comical way, a full account of the proceedings which had terminated so ludicrously in the court on the previous day, continuing: "Whin that letther was read, Corny, faith you'd think ould Carther's eyes were jumpin' out o' their sockets wid the surprise an' the rage he was in; an' if you seen him tearin' through the crowd to get out,—himsel' an' Garfield, only Garfield was afore him—an' iverybody around thim holdin' their sides an' shoutin' wid the laughther, you'd niver forgit it as long as yer name'd be Corny O'Toole. It was viry divartin' to mesel', Corny, an' I laughed wid the rist o' thim till all at once I thought o' the throuble I'd soon be in,—sure it would be all up wid mesel' an' Garfield now, an' I expected nothin' liss than that he'd be waitin' to shoot me. Faix, Corny, I was frightened, an' I begun to think o' puttin' me sowl in ordher; thin Carther kem to me moind—sure there was no tellin' what that ould sinner'd be up to. Mebbe it's go to Captain Dennier he would, to demand sathisfaction for the docymint he gev him—the docymint that the Widdy Moore's letther tuk the place av!" here Tighe chuckled, and Corny, equally relishing the laughable hoax which had been perpetrated in the exchange of papers, chuckled also, Tighe resumed: "Mebbe I'm suspected be Carther for havin' a hand in this thing, for there's no knowin' what the ould sandy-haired villain'd think o'; sure I was afeerd he'd be afther me on account o' the way the eshcape wint the other noight; but how an' iver that was, he niver showed himsel' in me soight, an' that's bad, Corny, for whin

ould Carther kapes himsel' quiet, an' out o' soight loike that, you may be sure that he's plottin' somethin' wid his partner, the other divil below!" and Tighe's finger pointed significantly downward.

"But how about Garfield?" demanded Corny, as deeply interested as was Tighe himself.

"Oh, sure, I was forgittin' the bist o' the joke: Garfield's desarted—fled the counthry intoirely, they say. Jack Moore, the widdy's brother, was waitin' for him to shoot him down; an' I guiss the poor *omadhaun* o' a quarthermasther got wind o' that, for they say he only waited long enough to buy a disguise, whin he quitted a counthry where he had such bad luck wid his love-letthers. His name is the spoort o' iverybody, an' the divil a bit, Corny, but you'll hear the soldiers an' the officers repatin' portions o' the letther, an' thin twistin' thimsel's wid the laughther about it. Didn't I hear Captain Dennier himsel' last noight, whin he had a couple o' officers in his room, laughin' as if his heart would break whin one o' thim was goin' through the whole thing, an' thryin' to remimber the exact contints o' the letther? An' the Widdy Moore—oh, Corny, but she'll niver hould her head so high agin; they say she's goin' out o' the counthry intoirely, wid the shame she's in."

"That's too bad," said Corny; "she was a fine, full woman, with a very dashing way of her own!"

"Yis," echoed Tighe; "but it's an ill wind that blows nobody good—sure that letther, now, that was the disgracin' o' her, mebbe it would be the savin' o' thim poor fellows that's on their thrial; they say there isn't proof enough agin thim, onless the paper is got that the letther tuk the place av, an' faith they'll be a long toime huntin' till they foind that paper!"

Again he chuckled, and Corny, as before, chuckled with him.

"But I must be movin'," resumed Tighe, rising, "for the captain'll be wantin' me;" and whistling to Shaun, who, hav-

ing ensconced himself in a corner of Corny's bed, now at his master's signal thrust his head comically forth between the curtains, as if to be certain of the call before he quite disturbed himself.

Corny also rose, and opening the drawer of a little table, took from its disordered contents a carefully-wrapped packet. Proffering it to Tighe, he said with great earnestness: "Mr Carmody, permit me to intrust to your care a letter that I have written to your mother."

Tighe's face assumed a most ludicrous expression of surprise and perplexity. "A letther to me mother, Corny—what's in it?"

"The expression of my honorable sentiments, Tighe; the revelation of my honest feelings—feelings that burned in my heart when Timothy Carmody stepped in before me and carried the day by offering himself before I had a chance to compose the proposal of marriage it was my intention to make to her."

"Oh!" ejaculated Tighe, prolonging the monosyllable and giving a ludicrous twist to his face. "Thin you changed yer moind, Corny, about lavin' her affections in the grave o' her husband? faith, I think——"

"No," interrupted Mr. O'Toole, warmly; "no, Mr. Carmody, I have no intention of disturbing her widowed affections, provided she still desires to leave them in the grave of her lamented husband; but in case she is not averse to withdrawing them, that"—pointing to the packet which Tighe had taken—"will tell her where she can deposit her delicate sentiments to the greatest advantage; it will tell her"—Corny swelled and flushed with the tremulous glow of his overwrought feelings—"that there is one heart, sir, that never ceased to beat with the deepest veneration and the most profound regard whenever the name of Mollie Carmody was mentioned."

Tighe turned aside on a pretense of looking for Shaun, but really to conceal the mirth with which he was inwardly convulsed, at the same time saying within himself; "Who iver

thought o' me mother turnin' a fellow's brain that way?" When his face had recovered its wonted expression, he turned back to Corny. "I'm loth to take this, Corny, for there's no tellin' whin I'd be in Dhrommacohol agin—I don't loike to ax the captain to be lettin' me away too often,—so you'd betther kape it awhile; or sure you could sind it be the mail."

"I could, Mr. Carmody, but I have my private reasons for wishing it to reach her hand from no one but you. So take it, Tighe, for fear I'd forget to give it to you, and deliver it at your convenience."

"Viry well, Corny, since you're sathisfied for me to give it at me convanience, there's no more to be said about the matther." And Tighe pocketed the carefully sealed letter, and with another whistle to Shaun, who, still reluctant to disturb himself, had not yet wholly withdrawn from the bed, he departed. Arrived at the barracks, and on his way to his master's apartments, he suddenly encountered Morty Carter. The meeting was mutually unexpected and undesired, for both instinctively recoiled, but Tighe was the first to recover his wonted manner. "How do you do, Mr. Carther; you're lukin' foine an' well, as if the world hadn't much agin you."

Carter looked sharply and suspiciously into the face of the speaker, but he gained nothing by the scrutiny.

"The last toime we had the pleasure o' seein' ache other," resumed Tighe, determined to probe till he should elicit some expression of Carter's feelings toward himself, "I didn't have much toime to pay me rispicts to you; you see, betune bein' mesel', an' afther, bein' me own swateheart, I was so bothered that it med me forgit me manners altogether!"

Still Carter did not answer; he only continued to look with fierce suspicion.

"But I'll tell you one thing," pursued Tighe, approaching his listener, and speaking with a confidential air: "I kept me word wid you, Mr. Carther—I niver tould a mother's sowl about what I promised you thin I'd kape saycret; an' mebbe

you thought I had a hand the other noight in the matther o' the eshcape—not a one bit, only that accidint med me in the jail yard at the very toime whin the rope was thrown over, as I tould iverybody.

Carter's face brightened, and his voice assumed a conciliatory tone as he asked: "When did you see Mr. O'Donoghue, Tighe—when did you have an interview with him?"

Tighe gazed about him before he answered, feigning intense anxiety lest there should be spectators, or eavesdroppers in the immediate vicinity; there were none, however, and he drew still closer to Carter and whispered: "Will you kape the saycret if I tell you somethin'—will you shwear niver to let it pass yer lips if I give you a bit o' information now?"

Carter was as truly eager as Tighe feigned to be, and in a glow of excitement, he instantly gave the desired pledge.

"Well, thin," said Tighe, with his mouth close to his listener's ear, "I was shpindin' the evenin' wid Ned Sutton, the warden, as I suppose you heerd, an' whin we were both overcome be the whisky, he said he thought o' somethin' that had come to his knowledge, an' it was that there was an eshcape an' an arrist that noight; an' whin I happened in the jail yard, as I tould you, sure who did I see poppin' out foreninst me but the young masther, an' at the same toime the rope was let over the wall. Thin it flashed on me what Sutton said, an' somehow I got it into me moind that there'd be danger if Mr. O'Donoghue'd attimpt to get away. I thried to make him go back; it was no use—he said he'd have to go on wid the vinture, if only for the sake o' one who was so good as to help him. Sure I guissed who that one was, for it's a power he always thought about you, Morty, an' it kem into me head to say that it was through you I was there, to bid him back to his cell as there was danger afore, an' that you had got warnin' o' it."

"And did he go then?" asked Carter, trembling with eagerness.

"Faith he did, an' I wint over the wall in his place."

"Tighe, you have done me an inestimable service!" and Carter wrung Tighe a Vohr's hand. "Though you think I have played the part of a traitor in giving information to the authorities, I'm not the villain you believe; I planned an escape for poor Carroll, intending to show him and his friends how true I was to him, and I did receive warning of the discovery of my plans; but it was too late to save the dear boy, or to get word to him in any way, and oh, the agony I suffered when I thought it was he they had captured!"

"I belave you, Mr. Carther," said Tighe, with feigned earnestness; "didn't I see it in yer face whin I ketched a glimpse o' you that noight as they pulled the cloak off me! Perhaps"—his countenance assumed a very doubtful expression—"a good dale o' it is lies that the payple tell about you; an' mebbe you were dhrove to the one black act you committed, an' mebbe you'd be thrue to the masther for the future."

Carter eagerly seized the bait which Tighe shrewdly threw out. "I *was* driven to it," he said; "and Heaven knows that young O'Donoghue has no one more truly devoted to his interests than I am!"

"Mebbe you're spakin' the thruth, Mr. Carther," answered Tighe with an expression in his face, and an accent in his voice, as if he was mentally struggling against some sudden conviction; "how an' iver, I'll belave you for the prisint—yis, I'll belave you,"—his voice growing firmer, as if his doubt of Carter's sincerity had yielded to fullest trust,—"an' toime'll tell whether I'm correct in me opinion."

"It will, Tighe," answered Carter with joyful animation; "and now tell me if you had any interview with Carroll since the night of his attempted escape."

"Intherview, is it? Why, thin, Mr. Carther, where is yer gumption at all? sure they wouldn't let the loike o' me nixt nor nigh him."

"He *is* very strictly guarded," resumed Carter; "and that's why I'm here to-day—to ask Captain Dennier to use his influ-

ence with the governor of the jail in my favor; you know they are warm friends, Tighe, and if the captain speaks for me, I shall be admitted to Carroll's cell. They are even more strict with the poor fellow since the night of the attempted escape."

"I know it," responded Tighe. "An' now come along if you want to see the captain—he'll be ready to recave you about this toime."

He led the way, Carter following, and having announced the name of the latter to the officer and, in obedience to the orders he received, having ushered Mr. Carter into Captain Dennier's presence, he retired to the adjoining apartment, where he vainly sought to distinguish a word of the interview. Nothing but an occasional sound of the voices reached him, and that only when either chanced to be pitched above the ordinary key; and every door leading to the room being tightly fastened, he could not make a pretense for putting one ajar. His efforts all failing to accomplish his object, he shook his fist in the direction of the apartment and muttered:

"You ould villain—it's well I know you—to get Captain Dennier to use his influince wid the governor o' the jail! a loikely sthory, whin the captain wouldn't use his influince for thim he thinks more o' than iver he thought o' that ould thraitor! An' him to be wantin' influince to get visitin' the young masther! oh, Morty Carther, it's a wondher yer ould carcass doesn't melt wid the hape o' lies that's coverin' it! Didn't Ned Sutton tell me that Carther had the run o' the whole prison? that the governmint luks upon him as the foinest informer in the whole o' Ireland; an' that he had the counthenance o' the higher authorities to do as he loiked wid the guards for the sake o' inthrappin' more o' the poor Fenians? I wondher, now, if it was a bad shtroke for me to say what I did about Sutton! it was the first thing that kem into me head, an' I thought if I could make Carther belave that I thrusted him agin, mebbe it would binefit the masther someway. He spakes as if he didn't see Carroll since the

noight o' the attimpt to eshcape—well, if he didn't, the divil a thing kipt him but the fear that Carroll found out his threachery ; an' now that he thinks he's safe agin, an' all his doin's saycret, I'll wager me month's pay that he'll be afther visitin' the cell widout much delay. An' he didn't suspect me o' havin' anything to do wid the Widdy Moore's letther. I wonder now what are his thoughts about that ? oh, Carther, you're the broth o' a b'y for informin', but faix, the toime'll be rare whin you won't be carcumvinted be Tighe a Vohr "

CHAPTER XXXIX.

INUENDOES.

CAPTAIN DENNIER received Morty Carter with the same cold and dignified manner which had characterized his former reception of him; while Carter, although his air was marked by a deference but little removed from obsequiousness, still betrayed by his nervousness, and the expression of his face, the indignation under which he labored.

"Your business?" demanded the officer frigidly.

Carter was stung; he writhed under the lash of the contempt implied in the freezing tone, the scorpion whip of that haughty demeanor, and he threw aside his deference and assumed a boldness born of his desperation: "I have come," he said, straightening himself, "to know why the paper containing information of importance to the government, which I gave into your hands, and which Lord Heathcote assured me should play an essential part in the trial of yesterday, was not produced?"

The officer's lip curled for an instant. "Permit me to ask, Mr. Carter, who delegated to you the right of putting such a question to me? your tone, sir, implies doubt of my having fulfilled the commission intrusted to me regarding the paper of which you speak; for your satisfaction, I shall say this much: the document passed safely from my hands to the proper authorities."

"To whom did you give it, when it passed from your immediate possession?" demanded Carter, forgetting, in his eagerness, that he was not speaking to an equal.

"You forget yourself, sir!" and Captain Dennier's eyes flashed in angry accompaniment to his indignant tone. "I

have given you all the information I choose to impart—for further account I refer you to Lord Heathcote."

Carter's manner became less bold. "You refuse to tell me into whose hands you committed the paper?" he said half-imploringly.

"I certainly do," responded the officer, "because I recognize no right of yours to question me. And now I must request you to end this interview."

Carter was again desperate; the inner working of his rage became manifest in the swelling of the veins in his forehead, and the spasmodic clutching of his fingers. "I'll end the interview," he said, striving to speak calmly, but despite his effort trembling in form and voice, "but I have something to say first: I'll see Lord Heathcote, as you advise me to do, and I'll communicate to him the result of *this* interview. Perhaps he will see as clearly as I do how little your heart is in the cause you pretend to serve, and perhaps he will think, as I do, that you are a party to the plot which kept that document from the court yesterday; and——"

"Enough, sir!" interrupted Captain Dennier with the same accent of stern contempt which he had used from the first; "and leave my presence before I summon some one to eject you!"

"I shall go," retorted Carter bitterly, "when I have said another word to you: you are not what you seem; you have no right to the name you bear, and it is in my power to reveal to you who you are; but your treatment of me has sealed my lips."

The officer, with a look of withering scorn, answered: "Did you choose to reveal my identity, as you imply that it is in your power to do, do you think that I would credit the statement of a *traitor?* go, Mr. Carter, and when next you would use for your own infamous interests any little knowledge that you may have gained surreptitiously of a man's birth, or family, do not choose one who will be as little affected by your knowledge as your present subject." He rung a hand-

bell, and Tighe immediately appeared to show baffled, enraged Carter out.

"Did you succeed in gettin' what you wanted?" he whispered when they reached a part beyond the officer's quarters.

"No!" answered Carter, his face purple from suppressed rage.

"An' you won't get seein' the young masther?" said Tighe, in well-affected disappointment; "sure, I was buildin' on yer tellin' him how it all was the other noight, an' tellin' him also o' the achin' in me heart bekaise I can't get seein' him mesel'."

But Carter was in no mood either to answer Tighe, or to volunteer any information, and with a hurried good day both parted—the former to repair to his lodging in order to deliberate on his next proceeding, and the latter to seek Shaun, and to give vent to his feelings by the following address to the dog: "Faith, Shaun, I think the intherview, as he called it, wid the captain, didn't do him much good—his face was loike a busted bate, an' his eyes'd frighten one. Somehow I'm inclined to think a dale o' Captain Dennier; he has viry noble ways wid him, an' I wish it was in me power to do somethin' in his favor wid regard to Miss O'Donoghue. I wondher, now, if I did spake a good word for him would it help matthers? I'll think over it." And so saying, he proceeded to his duties.

Morty Carter had reached his lodging, and had just begun his old exercise of walking the floor in order to quiet his disturbed mind, when a knock sounded. He opened to admit Rick of the Hills. "Come in!" he said in a surly manner, as Rick seemed to pause for an invitation.

"You are out of sorts," said Rick, quietly seating himself.

"I am," answered Carter, continuing his nervous stride of the room; "everything is going against me."

"*Everything!*" repeated Rick, "why, has anything new happened since the failure of your plan for Carroll O'Donoghue's escape?"

"Yes; something that I rested all my hopes on—that I plotted night and day for, has failed me: miserably failed

me!" His pace grew more hurried, as if he would vent his fierce excitement in increased motion. "The disappointment is eating my heart out!" he continued; "but"—he suddenly changed his voice and paused, standing directly before Rick: "all is not yet lost, and, if the hopes that remain to me succeed, there will be happiness and plenty for us both at last, Rick. I thought of making another journey to Dublin, but I've changed my mind—I'll write instead; and now have you come to tell me that *you* have succeeded—that you have Nora's answer?" He bent forward in his eagerness, his hot breath fanning the haggard face beneath him.

"I have come to tell you," answered Rick hurriedly, and with a wild determination in his eyes, "that I have no answer for you."

"She refused to give it?" questioned Carter, his brow gathering into a scowl.

"I did not ask it," responded Rick, rising; "and, what is more, I shall *never* ask it!"

"Never!" echoed Carter, as if he were dumbfounded.

"Never!" repeated Rick, folding his arms, and confronting Carter with the apparent desperation of a wild beast at bay.

Carter hissed: "So you, too, would turn tail upon me? perhaps you forget *Cathleen!*"

A look of agony broke into the pallid, pinched face for a moment, as if the poor wretch was about to sink under a sudden swell of emotion; but some mighty effort kept it back, and he answered as firmly as before: "Could I forget *her*, Carter, I would fling you and your hellish work aside forever! because I cannot forget her, I am still bound to your interests; but Nora is *mine*—do you understand, Morty Carter? *mine!* and before my tongue should say to her what you bade me tell her, I would tear it out from the roots."

Carter shrunk from the desperate eyes which glared at him, and feeling how impotent would be his own anger to meet a passion as fierce and determined as that now confronting him,

he refrained from the indignant burst upon his lips, and sought to soothe his visitor. "Perhaps I expected too much of you, Rick, when I asked you to do that; well, we'll let it go for the present, and when things become more settled I'll put the question boldly and respectfully to her myself."

"And it's a refusal you'll get, Carter; mind you, I'm telling you beforehand, so that you'll be prepared."

"I'll risk it anyway," was the response; "and now we'll drink to its success!" he brought forth a bottle and glasses from some recess in the room, and proceeded to fill the latter. Rick pushed his tumbler away.

"I'll be firm this time, Carter—I'll not taste it. I promised Nora this morning when I left her that a drop should not pass my lips to-day, and I'll keep my word."

Carter laughed, and jokingly mocked Rick's determination; but he could hardly conceal his disappointment and his rage when he found that neither pleasantries nor coaxing, nor even implied menaces, could induce his visitor to put the glass even to his lips. It was evident, however, that the poor creature's resistance to the temptation cost him much—his tremor and flush painfully attested that. "It's a wonderful ascendency she's gained over you already!" Carter said sneeringly at last, when he was forced to put back the liquor untasted, save by himself.

Rick did not answer; he stood silently surveying the floor, till Carter returned from his task of putting away the bottle; then he said in a lower tone than he had previously used: "The money that you gave me is out."

"And I'm not able to give you more," replied Carter; "I haven't enough for my own expenses, the way things are going. No, Rick"—placing his hand on Rick's shoulder, and speaking in a confidential tone,—"you'll have to manage the best way you can without any more aid from me till Nora consents. Then, I am not afraid to say, I shall be in possession of a fortune, and you shall share it."

"I see," responded Rick bitterly, shaking off the hand

which still rested on his shoulder: "you would make beggars of both Nora and me." He strode toward the door, opened it, and going out, slammed it violently behind him; the next instant he was hurrying down the stair.

"I must set a watch upon him," muttered Carter; "he is rife for treason against *me* now, and he might take some step in his desperation, that would ruin my plans."

CHAPTER XI.

A STORM-TOSSED SOUL.

NORA MCCARTHY, or Nora Sullivan, as she now called herself, had begun her self-imposed toil, Mrs. Murphy good-naturedly disposing of the fancy needlework, and bringing in return a compensation, alas! too slight for the demands, economical though they were, which the noble girl would supply. Still she wrought, happy to have employment, and happier still to show the poor creature from whom she continued in secret to recoil, that she was not wanting in a daughter's truest affection. One letter from Dhrommacohol, written conjointly by Father Meagher and Clare, had reached her; it was full of the tender regard of both, and it announced their intention to visit Nora when they should come up to Tralee to be present at Carroll's trial, which was now but a fortnight away. Filled as was her heart with painful anxiety about Carroll, and torn as it was with anguish whenever she reverted to the thought of the barrier which she had deemed it her duty to erect between them, she still, on the receipt of the letter, looked about the little humble home with a glow of satisfaction, as she fancied Father Meagher and Clare admiring its neatness. Her hands had given a graceful touch to everything, and the sunshine streaming pleasantly into the room, together with her own beautiful self bending over her work, made the little apartment appear so bright and inviting that Rick, returning from his interview with Carter, paused as he opened the door in order to view the scene. She greeted him with a smile, and putting down her work, rose to busy herself about his comfort.

"I told Mrs. Murphy not to bring up the dinner until you would return," she said; "so now I shall call her."

"No; wait a moment—I have something to say to you." He motioned her back to her chair, while he stood before her with folded arms. "It has come to this at last: that I am penniless. The person who helped me before, and that I thought would continue to do so, has refused. It was cruel of me to take you from your comfortable home, when I knew that I might be bringing you to want such as will press upon us now: but it is not yet too late to remedy what I have done. I shall send you back to Father Meagher, and I can live as I have lived before."

She was up from her seat, her queenly form drawn to its full height, her beautiful eyes humid with emotion. "Is this, then, the return you will permit me to make for your affection—send me back to comfort, while *you* wander in misery? Oh, father! is then my love of such little worth that you think poverty can frighten it away? I shall *never* leave you! what *your* fate is, mine shall be; should you have to beg, I too can ask for alms!"

"You do not know what you are talking about!" said Rick, wearily and sadly, and with his face averted, as if he feared to look at her.

"I do," she answered, her voice losing none of its firmness; "the poverty you speak of means that we cannot even keep this little home—we must seek a cheaper abode; that will not be so difficult to find, and by using economy with that which I already earn, it will be enough for us both."

She would listen to no more from him; and in truth he seemed too overcome by emotion, or perhaps weakness—for latterly but little nourishment passed his lips,—to have the strength to urge her farther. He sunk unresistingly into the seat she had left, and watched her in silence, when, having called to Mrs. Murphy to bring up the dinner, she busied herself with the simple preparations for the little meal. She coaxed Rick to eat, and to gratify her he made the effort;

but every mouthful seemed to choke the poor wretch, as he thought of the life of hardship to which he was about to introduce the beautiful girl. "Nora," he said at last, pushing his plate away, "I cannot eat in the face of all you will have to suffer if you remain with me! beside, I shall be breaking my word to Father Meagher—I promised him that you should have at least a decent, comfortable home. It is no longer in my power to give you such."

"I am capable of enduring much," she answered; "and Father Meagher need not know just for the present of the change in our circumstances; it might grieve him, and I know it would cause him to strain his slender purse for our benefit. After a little, when I have learned to work harder, so that my earnings will amount to more, we shall be able to live comfortably again, and then we shall let Father Meagher know. Cheer up, father; the dear God will provide for us, and I shall mind nothing—poverty, hardship, suffering,—if it reclaims you to the religion you have so long forgotten."

Rick groaned.

She continued: "I have articles of dress that I do not need, and that Mrs. Murphy will dispose of for me."

Rick bounded from the table. "I must go out," he said; "I shall smother if I stay here longer!"

"Where?" she asked, her voice trembling with anxiety, and something akin to terror, for these wild, sudden moods disconcerted, and even daunted her.

"To look for a home for us; since you *will* share my poverty, you may as well face its hardship at once!" He darted out, his wild emotions lending new strength to his weakened limbs. He could have shrieked in his burning remorse, his wild despair, and more than one turned to look after the rapidly walking man, whose pallid face, compressed lips, and glaring eyes told the story of a tortured heart. He halted as he passed the public houses, his wonted haunts,—his whole being was crying for a draught of the fiery stuff which would stifle the cries of his miserable conscience, and

give him courage for new guilt ; but the thought of the noble, self-sacrificing being from whom he had just parted, the vivid remembrance of her look, her voice, as she had besought him that morning to refrain from liquor for the day, held him back ; he turned away and walked on, scarcely conscious whither he was going.

Could he have bestowed one backward glance into the room he had left, it might have given the last impetus that was needed to make him emerge from the guilt in which he was plunged, and the mire of which was ingulfing him deeper each moment. Nora had flown sobbing to her knees, her grief all the more bitter and violent because of its very reaction—she restrained it so sternly in Rick's presence, she immolated herself so remorselessly before him, assuming cheerfulness and tender filial regard when her whole being was recoiling from both, and her heart was torn with the thought of all that she had sacrificed. Then Rick's own manner,—moody, silent, repellent, betraying little of the affection of which he had given such touching descriptions to herself and Father Meagher—all acted upon her now with resistless sway ; but she had voluntarily accepted her cross, and however deep it cut she would not murmur. She dried her eyes when the burst had spent itself, and calling good-natured Mrs. Murphy to her aid, began to examine her wardrobe for the purpose of disposing of its superfluous articles. Alas ! there were not many ; it looked more meager than even poor Nora had thought, and by the time she had retained the very necessary articles, there was little left, and that little of comparatively small value. But Mrs. Murphy, who had been drying secret tears of compassion during the whole of the inspection, had words of cheer to offer. She comforted the poor young creature, and taking the garments which had been selected, promised to make a speedy disposal of them. She was true to her word, and returning much sooner than Nora had anticipated, poured into the latter's hand a larger sum than the poor girl expected to receive. Had Nora been aware that the amount

was swelled from good-natured, sympathetic Mrs. Murphy's own pocket, she would not have been so joyfully surprised, nor so eager to accept.

The kind landlady, charmed as she was with the lovely girl, and puzzled to reconcile the near relationship of the latter to so uncouth and vagabond-looking a being as Rick of the Hills, was so touched when she discovered their poverty, and that it was owing to the latter they must leave her, that she would have insisted on their remaining did not her own slender means prevent.

Rick returned in the wane of the afternoon, and in so exhausted a condition that Nora, filled alone with pity for his evident suffering, besought him to rest. He shook his head. "I cannot till you are settled; I have hired our new home,"—speaking bitterly—"and we can go there now."

"You are so weak," she answered, "will it not be better to wait till to-morrow? Mrs. Murphy has kindly said not to hurry."

"No," he said quickly, "we must go now!"

She offered no further remonstrance, though she wondered somewhat at his singular haste, but began her few preparations for departure.

The abode to which Rick conducted her did cause her to give one little involuntary shudder as she crossed the threshold: it was so small, so sparsely furnished, and situated in a quarter of the town where only the poorest congregated. Still, even in that moment of bitter repugnance, she forced a smile to her lips, and spoke cheerfully, while Rick, as usual, watched her in sullen silence. As in their previous abode, she went about re-arranging the few articles of furniture, and striving to atone, by her own exquisite taste, for the lack of beauty, and even ordinary neatness, in the two little apartments. True to her self-imposed mission, she suffered neither the poverty, nor hardship, nor disgust, with which her hard and isolated life was filled to cause her to betray a murmur of regret or dissatisfaction. She was always the same, when

Rick left her and when he returned—cheerful, and apparently contented,—making the best of their present position, and hopeful for the future.

She had learned the way to the shops, and was now able herself to dispose of her handiwork; but she always went out heavily veiled, and dressed poorly enough not to seem above the humble rank she had assumed. Rick sometimes put money into her hand which he said he had earned by loitering about the public houses, and doing chance errands; he could have told her how, driven to desperation by her noble sacrifice, he had sought for steady labor, but his weakened condition, and his wandering life, so little accustomed to work of any kind, utterly unfitted him for it.

She had not apprised Father Meagher of the change in their circumstances, and perhaps the fact of that bitter isolation from all that she loved told more upon her health and spirits than any other deprivation. She was "wilting," as Rick expressed it,—"wilting before his very eyes;" for despite her assumed cheerfulness, he noticed her daily increasing pallor, and the look about her eyes each morning which indicated a night of sleeplessness.

In her enforced journeys to bring home and to return with her work, she went far out of her way in order to pass the jail—there was a melancholy pleasure in being under the shadow of the walls which held him for whom her heart so fondly beat, though she herself had passed the fiat which must perpetually separate them.

CHAPTER XLI.

TIGHE'S EFFORTS TO AID CAPTAIN DENNIER'S COURTSHIP.

It wanted but a week of Carroll's trial, and the interest and excitement which had centered about those recently tried for participation in the attack on the barracks was not yet allayed; it received fresh and startling impetus from the youth and reputation of Carroll O'Donoghue—stories were told of his daring, his wonderful escape from Australia, the loss of his ancient home, which could hardly fail to attract and interest the most indifferent hearts. His name was on every tongue, and more than one fair maid was anxious to obtain a sight of the brave, handsome young prisoner. Even Nora was forced to hear the gossip about him; in the very shop to which she carried her work men were discussing the probability of his speedy execution. She drew her veil tighter, and clasped her hands on her side under her cloak, to quiet a sudden pain; and all the way home burning tears obscured her vision, and unhappy thoughts made her brain ache. When Rick came in that night she assailed him with questions about the approaching trial, striving to speak with unusual vivacity in order to hide her horrible anxiety. He detailed all that he knew.

"Will you take me to the court when the trial begins?" she asked, her voice trembling a little; "we can stay in some retired part, and I shall be so heavily veiled that no one will recognize me."

"Yes," responded Rick, looking at her sharply, but not suffering his countenance to show the thoughts which that look engendered; "we can go where much notice will not be taken of us."

About the same time, in a different part of the town, Cap-

tain Dennier had startled his valet by saying: "Tighe, I am thinking of a journey to Dhrommacohol—can you guide me to the home of Miss O'Donoghue, the sister of the prisoner?"

Tighe's face became immediately aglow, and his eyes danced with delight. "Faith, yer honor, you couldn't give me a task more to me moind! I'll be proud an' happy to show you the way."

"Very well, then, we'll take the morning car."

Tighe seemed to hesitate.

"What is the matter?" asked the officer.

"I was only thinkin' that it moightn't be respictful to yer honor to take Shaun, but I couldn't lave him, for he'd pine wid the lonesomeness, an' mebbe it'd give him another shpell o' sickness!" and the look of distress which accompanied the observation was most ludicrous.

"Oh, bring him by all means!" laughed the captain; and Tighe, relieved, left the room to impart to Shaun at his first opportunity his opinion of Captain Dennier's unexpected announcement:

"Begorra, Shaun, it's nothin' else than love that's takin' him; he's as lost a man wid regard to his heart as there's in Tralee, aye, as there's in the whole o' Ireland this day; he's as far gone as that poor *omadhaun* Garfield was! How an' iver, as I said afore, it's an ill wind that blows nobody good, an' the wind that's blowin' him to Miss O'Donoghue will blow me to Moira, an' faith it'll blow Corny O'Toole's letther to me mother!"

And laughing softly as he imagined what might be the ridiculous contents of the epistle, he began to busy himself with preparations for the journey.

Father Meagher was absent on his parish rounds, when Captain Dennier, escorted by Tighe, and followed by Shaun, arrived at the little pastoral residence. Moira admitted them, and the presence of the military stranger awing her somewhat, prevented the scream of delight with which she would

have greeted Tighe. She ushered the officer into the parlor, saying she would summon Miss O'Donoghue, and with one of her pretty, naive courtesies, withdrew. Tighe was waiting for her in the hall.

"Tell Miss O'Donoghue," he said, catching both of Moira's not unwilling hands close within his own, "that I'd loike to see her first. I have somethin' to say privately to her."

"Why, Tighe, what can *you* have to say privately to a lady like her?"

Tighe whispered, casting meanwhile many a significant glance toward the parlor door: "Jist a word, Moira, to take the twists out o' the road that's betune the two o' thim—don't you see they're in the same harrowin' shtate as mesel' an' you are?"

"What do you mean, Mr. Carmody?" and Moira gave her pretty head a toss.

"*Mr. Carmody!*" repeated Tighe, with ludicrous amazement; "is that the exprission o' yer sintimints for me now? well, mebbe I had no roight to say you were in the same shtate as mesel'. Faith there's no thrust in wimen these toimes—if you have thim one day, you're not sure o' thim the nixt, an' I wouldn't be surprised, Moira, if yer head was runnin' this minit on the flatthery that some *omadhaun's* been givin' you."

Moira drew herself up. "And why shouldn't I, Mr. Carmody, receive somebody else's attentions—they tell of your doings in the town—your racing, and your sporting, and——"

"Och, Moira darlin', is it that that's throublin' you? Faith, there's not one thing in that shtory, but a lot o' baldherdash about a horse which I'll explain to you at a more convanient toime; an' don't you see how thrue I am?"—he pointed to the faded bow at the side of his hat; "through thick an' thin, Moira, it niver laves its place. Come, be yersel' agin, an' give me that flower in yer breast, as a mark o' yer forgiveness." A bunch of heliotrope, picked that morning, adorned the front of Moira's dress.

Moira could not resist the tone in which the words were uttered, nor the glance by which they were accompanied ; she gave him the flower, and with an ejaculation expressive of her own feelings on the subject of her delay in summoning Miss O'Donoghue, she flew to find that lady. Tighe remained in the hall, and intercepted Clare when she was on her way to the parlor.

"Only a word, miss," he said with his most respectful bow.

"Certainly, Tighe"—extending her hand with charming condescension ; "have you news of my brother?"

"No, miss, I'm sorry to say I have nothin' to tell you about him—it's regardin' the captain beyant,"—indicating the parlor door by a motion of his head, and then stopping short in confusion that almost amounted to consternation, as he realized for the first time the boldness and the difficulty of the task he had imposed on himself.

"Well, Tighe, go on,"—and Miss O'Donoghue's wonder and curiosity increased.

"Oh, Miss O'Donoghue, I'm afeerd you'll be angry intoirely wid me, whin you hear what I have to say ; if I thought more about it afore, I wouldn't be takin' the liberty I'm doin'."

"No, no, Tighe ; go on—I shall forgive you whatever it is."

"Well, thin"—blurting the words out, while the rosy hue of his cheeks became deeper, and his hands worked awkwardly together,—"I have the manes o' suspectin' that the captain is dapely in love wid you ; an' oh, Miss O'Donoghue, he's so noble, an' so big-hearted, that it kem into me head to spake a good word for him. If he axes you, an' it'd be agin yer principles to say 'yis,' do the refusin' loightly, so it won't break his heart."

Clare was painfully scarlet. "You are mistaken, Tighe," she said ; "the gentleman has not met me a sufficient number of times to do more than recognize my face."

"Faith, miss, it's little matther about that—love doesn't wait for toimes nor places. I niver was mishtaken in a case

o' it yet; an' whin I seen the signs an' tokens o' it in the captain, I was touched intoirely be rayson o' his goodness. Forgive the liberty I'm takin', but oh, Miss O'Donoghue, promise me you won't give him a woundin' denial!"

"Really, this is too absurd!" and Clare, her painful blush dyeing her very neck, turned abruptly from Tighe, and hurried to the parlor.

"Well," muttered the discomfited Tighe a Vohr, "I thried to do him a good turn, an' if it fails, it's through no lack o' a worthy intintion on my part."

Captain Dennier, in his impatience at the delay, was already standing when Clare entered—she had paused a moment without the parlor door to allow her flush to subside, and to acquire steadiness in her voice. He came forward with the courtly bow she so well remembered.

"Miss O'Donoghue!" his tones were tremulous, and the color in his cheek and the flash in his eye, evinced painful anxiety. "Pardon my intrusion, made this time, perhaps, with less excuse than it was in my power to offer on previous occasions; but I have come impelled by a desire to see you, and to ask you once more to think kindly of me—I would have this assurance before I leave forever a land that shall always have for me most sweet, and yet most bitter, memories."

She had involuntarily started at the announcement of his departure. He observed the motion and it seemed to make him bolder.

"May I take with me," he said, "the assurance of your kindly feeling; despite the cruel character it was my painful duty to assume, may I bear with me to the distant land to which I go the remembrance of your charitable forgiveness?"

He had advanced to her, and had extended his hand. Blushing, trembling, confused, Clare listened; but at his approach she recovered herself, and sought to feign the dignity and reproach which she deemed it her duty to feel; affecting not to see his proffered hand, she answered: "If you did but

your duty, Captain Dennier, I know not why you should seek forgiveness, and least of all from me, the sister of your victim; nor can I think of what consequence can be my feeling toward you, whether kindly or not, when I am only one of those rebels it is your choice, and your boast, to crush. You mock me, sir, by speaking as you do, when my brother lies in a jail in imminent danger of execution through your means."

She paused, but it was only because emotion threatened to overpower her.

"Cease, Miss O'Donoghue, I beg of you!" and the officer's voice was as tremulous as her own had been; "you misjudge, you wrong me!"

Her lip curled contemptuously. "Wrong you!" she straightened herself, and drew back from him. "A single word from you to the governor of the jail would have won for us the favor we craved—an interview with my brother. I knelt to you for it, Captain Dennier, but you refused—surely, to one who holds such stern ideas of duty, the feelings of those who are crushed by that relentless principle can make little difference."

She turned slightly from him, and pressed her clasped hands to her forehead; it was throbbing wildly from her painful excitement. He watched her a moment in silence, as if he would fain read something in that forbidding deportment which would not chill entirely the hope still within him; but nothing appeared—evidently she was only waiting for him to end the interview.

"Miss O'Donoghue,"—the sadness in his voice thrilled her—"I see that the opinion which you first formed of me has remained unaltered, and I feel now that no explanation, no entreaty of mine, can change it. Be it so! I shall cease to urge you, and I shall detain you only to say that I could not leave Ireland forever without at least endeavoring to prove to you that I acted in the sad affair of your brother reluctantly, and but in accordance with my duty. Because that duty compels so bitter and so constant a sacrifice of my feel-

ings, I am about to resign my commission in her Majesty's service."

"*Resign your commission!*" she turned to him, her dignity, that was almost hauteur, the scornful curl of her lip, suddenly vanished, and in their place delighted surprise and interest. The spark of hope still within the officer's breast kindled into flame; again he approached her, and again he ventured to extend his hand.

"May I dare to hope that my resignation will be regarded by you as a sort of atonement for the misery I have so unwillingly caused; and in future years, when time has closed the wounds now so painfully open, will you extend to me the charity you now refuse?"

Clare was silent, but she could no longer refuse her hand; she gave it to him, though apparently with some reluctance, while at the same time she averted her face to conceal its painful color. She was a sad puzzle to herself; admiring, nay, more, secretly esteeming this man, who had committed no fault save that of stern devotion to his duty, flattered by his deference, and the too evident regard with which she had inspired him, and withal feeling that, because he was her country's foe by birth and principle, she must maintain toward him the cold demeanor which she had first assumed, the struggle between her inclination to meet him with his own frank kindness, and her desire to be true alone to her own stern idea of duty, was excessively painful. Possibly he read much of her inner strife, for he dropped her hand after a moment's warm pressure, and waited in silence. She *would* be strong, she *would* be faithful to the patriotism which it was her pride to avow, and calling to mind Nora McCarthy's noble spirit of sacrifice, she determined not to be less self-immolating.

"Captain Dennier"—her voice was tremulous from her inward struggle,—"truth compels me to admit that I honor and admire the spirit you have shown, but my sense of duty forces me to say that I cannot regard you as the friend you

would be considered—to me you are still my country's foe, and my brother's captor."

She sought to meet his eyes with a steady gaze of her own, but they dropped before his sad, thrilling look

"Then, Miss O'Donoghue, I have only to say farewell!"

He turned away without again extending his hand, but the sadness of the tone in which his last words were uttered had pierced her through.

"Captain Dennier!" His name had burst from her in the wild gush of remorseful feeling, and its tone too plainly told of the unmaidenly warmth of her emotions; but the next instant she would have given worlds to be able to recall it. He turned, and read in her trembling confusion more than sufficient to give him renewed hope.

"You have reconsidered your determination, Miss O'Donoghue," he said; "you will accord me that which I crave; you will let me bear from Ireland the promise of at least your future friendly regard?"

"No, no!" she waved him back, maidenly shame alone asserting itself; and then overcome by her conflicting emotions, she burst into tears.

The officer, utterly unversed in feminine moods, was too unskilled to read in that very grief a favorable sign; he was deeply distressed, and when he had watched her a few moments, as if he could endure the scene no longer, he said: "Miss O'Donoghue, I beg of you——"

"It is nothing, sir," she interrupted, ceasing to weep, but keeping her handkerchief to her eyes; "pray forget my weakness, and as you have already said, so do I now say, farewell. I hear Father Meagher entering; he will receive you." She went from the room, leaving him too saddened and too bewildered to attempt to detain her.

Father Meagher entered almost immediately, and in his genial, hearty way he welcomed the officer; the latter was too much under the influence of his recent feelings to be able to respond in the same cordial manner, but the priest, without

affecting to notice it, proceeded in his own hospitable fashion to make the young man perfectly at home. "You must remain to dinner," he said; "nay, no denial,"—as he saw Captain Dennier about to murmur a polite refusal; "you must test our Dhrommacohol fare this once."

The captain still courteously declined, and murmured something about Tighe, and the time of the next mail-car.

"Well, then, that settles it," said the priest; "for Tighe has taken the liberty of going on an expedition of his own—I met him on the way to his mother's, and he begged me to make an apology to you, and to say that he expected to be back before you would have time to miss him. So you see, captain, you are forced to remain, for, having once experienced Tighe's inimitable protection, you would find it difficult to get along without him."

The officer, despite his heavy heart, found himself smiling at the priest's playful remark, and unwilling as he was to defer his departure, he was not able to farther resist the kind invitation.

Tighe, on his hurried way to his mother's, with Shaun at his heels, often chuckled as he thought of the letter snugly away in one of his pockets. It was brought forth with many an amusing gesture, and dramatic display of facial expression, when at length, having arrived in the little dwelling, and having returned the old woman's demonstrative welcome, he told her the object of his visit and the necessity for haste on his part.

She took the packet from his hand, carefully unwrapped its outer covering, and then stood turning it over and over, gazing at the address when the latter was upside down with the same interest that she bestowed upon it when it was turned in the right direction—for the position of the letters made little difference to the honest old soul; her education was as meager as Tighe's own. "What's in it, Tighe?" Her eyes were distended with astonishment.

He took it from her, and proceeded to open it, looking

very knowing and mysterious the while. "Do you see now," —when at length he had Corny O'Toole's deeply-shaded, cramped characters fully displayed—"that first word manes ——" He stopped short, and looked significantly at the old woman, whose capped head, in her eagerness to see the writing, was very close to Tighe's cheek.

"Manes what? you're enough to make a saint mad! why don't you go on an' rade it for me if you're able to?"

"Aisy, mother; sure I'm preparin' you for the contints. Listen now!" He bent again very earnestly to the letter, at one time holding it so close to his eyes that his nose well-nigh touched the paper, and again putting it at arm's length from him.

"Well!" said his mother impatiently.

"Och, begorra, mother, what'll we do at all—sure it's Latin the writin' is in, an' that's the rayson I couldn't make it out afore!"

"*Latin!*" and Mrs. Carmody's mouth, as well as her eyes, was distended in astonishment.

"Aye, mother! listen to the quare sound that the words has:"—and thereupon he began so voluble and ridiculous a gibberish, rolling his eyes and working his face, as if the very pronunciation caused him a desperate effort, that his mother added uplifted hands to the other outward expressions of her great astonishment.

"What does it mane, at all, Tighe?" she asked.

"Faith, mother, sure it's well you know I'm not scholar enough to tell you that!"

"Well, tell me this, thin,—who gev you that letther for me?" and the old woman stood in a very determined attitude before him.

"Now, mother, didn't I tell you afore that it was jist gev into me hand be a——" Tighe was seized with a violent fit of coughing, during which, pretending to be in imminent danger of bursting a blood-vessel, he made signs for some salt and water.

The simple old soul, somewhat alarmed, hastened to obey; and Tighe, feigning recovery, burst at once into so long and winding an account of his ailment that she forgot to press the question of the letter; Tighe hastened his departure, not ceasing for a moment, however, to talk about everything save Corny O'Toole's epistle, in order that he might continue to divert her attention. At the last, however, when she stood on the threshold, bidding him adieu, and exhorting him to take care of that distressing cough, she concluded by saying: "An' I'll go up this evenin' to Father Meagher wid the letther; sure he knows Latin,an' he'll rade it for me."

Tighe with difficulty stifled the laugh which her announcement caused, and strode off without looking behind him. Out on the road, he said to Shaun:

"Faith it's the roarin' toime I'm thinkin' his riverince'll have whin he rades Corny O'Toole's Latin letther!"

CHAPTER XLII.

MRS. CARMODY'S LATIN LETTER.

THE dinner at the little pastoral residence passed more pleasantly than Captain Dennier had anticipated; Clare presided at the table, and save for her heightened color, and a certain involuntary nervousness of manner, there was nothing to betray her recent agitation. She was studiously polite to the young officer, but her courtesy was cold as well—all the colder because she was obliged to confess to a secret pleasure at his presence. She loathed herself for her weakness, and sought to atone for it by putting into her manner all that she dared of repelling dignity.

The young man felt it, but he was too happy in being so near her to permit her coldness to cast an entire cloud over him. The witchery of her manner, the grace of her person, the charm of her low, sweet voice, all were about him, and it was only by an effort that he could keep himself attentive to the clergyman's genial conversation, and by a still more earnest effort that he could contribute to the innocent pleasantries with which the warm-hearted priest enlivened the meal. But he strove to do his part, and once he met the soft brown eyes opposite, turned upon him with involuntary admiration.

"So you are fully determined to resign your commission, and to quit Ireland?" said Father Meagher, when the dinner was nearly ended; "may I ask to what quarter of the world you will set your face then?"

Clare seemed to hang upon the expected answer for a moment, then suddenly remembering herself, she dropped her eyes to the plate, and colored still deeper.

"My destination will rather depend upon Lord Heathcote," Captain Dennier responded. "He is my patron, and I shall possibly guide my future movements by his counsel."

The priest became silent, and the meal being finished, Clare was glad of an excuse to retire; she left the gentlemen over their cigars, and hurried to her own room, which she did not leave until summoned to say farewell to the young officer.

The adieu, save for the pressure of his hand as he held her passive fingers for a moment, was as cold upon his part as it was upon her own; and not even a glance betrayed to the clergyman the depth and the agony of the feelings that swelled in the two young hearts beside him. Captain Dennier departed, accompanied by the escorts with whom he had arrived that morning, and Clare was forced to hear from Father Meagher a panegyric on the young man's noble qualities.

"I have rarely met," said the priest, "such an excellent character; his devotion to principle is remarkable!"

"So, also, was his relentless cruelty to my brother!" spoke up Clare sharply; she spoke thus in order to hide her remorse for her coldness to the officer—a remorse which the clergyman's praise of the young man made all the keener.

Father Meagher looked up surprised and pained. "Why, Clare! I thought you had learned more Christian charity—Carroll himself would laud this young soldier; and even your unforgiving wrath ought to be appeased by the fact of his intended resignation. He intimated to me that he had told you the cause."

"Christian charity!" she repeated; "I see in him only the one who has caused my brother's imprisonment—who has refused me the favor for which I knelt—whose principles are against the poor, struggling, inthralled Irish!"

She left the room before Father Meagher could utter a word of the indignant reprimand which rose to his lips, and looking toward the door, which she had not closed behind her, he said to himself: "Human nature is difficult to understand, but feminine human nature defies all finite intelligence."

He turned to repair to his study, but he was summoned, before he reached it, to meet Mrs. Carmody. She was in quite a flutter of excitement, drawing a letter from the folds of her shawl and proffering it with a low courtesy to the priest.

"Tighe says it's a letther in Latin, yer riverince, addhressed to me, an' I kem up to have you rade it."

"A letter in Latin!" repeated the priest, looking very much astonished; "why, what learned correspondent have you, Mrs. Carmody, to be addressing you in a dead language?"

"Faith, yer riverince, I couldn't tell you, if I was thinkin' from now till the harvest; nor do I know who'd be writin' to me at all, much liss in such a quare, outlandish way as that."

"Well, we'll soon see, Mrs. Carmody,"—and the priest drew the missive from the already opened envelope, his face breaking into a broad smile as he glanced his eye over the contents before reading aloud. "Did Tighe tell you that it was in Latin?" he asked, looking up.

"Faith he did!"

"Well, this is what the letter says, Mrs. Carmody:

"'RESPECTED MRS. MOLLIE CARMODY:

Permit one to address you who, despite the changing vicissitudes of an unhappy fortune, has ever retained your image in his secret bosom. In the golden and hallowed glow of a never-to-be-forgotten past, your beautiful face was the star that lit my ardent destiny, and in the desolate present your widowed heart is the only one to which my own solitary and forlorn organ turns. If, oh, if, respected Mrs. Mollie, it be in your power to withdraw your lonely affections from the grave of your lamented husband, and you are not averse to bestow them where they shall encounter only the deepest appreciation and the most respectful regard, then Corny O'Toole will be proud and happy to receive them, and to make you, dearest Mollie, the wife of the undersigned.

I remain, dearest Mrs. Carmody, yours with the most profound sentiments of regard and enraptured admiration,

CORNY O'TOOLE.'"

The clergyman put down the letter, laughing loud and heartily, while Mrs. Carmody's face, between astonishment and indignation, afforded a most ludicrous study. She did not join in the priest's mirth; she was too angry for being made the object of Corny O'Toole's ardent affection, and she burst out, forgetting, in her vexation, the respectful tone which she was accustomed to use to his reverence:

"That's the rayson Tighe didn't tell me who the letther was from;—it's well he was aware, the *spalpeen*, o' who was the writer, an' it's well he was aware that me hand would scorn to touch it if he tould me who it kem from. A letther in *Latin*, indade! faith the counthry knows Corny O'Toole's Latin—a foine baldherdash o' words that have naythur head nor tail to thim!"

"Why, Mrs. Carmody," answered the priest, when his mirth had somewhat subsided, "you seem to set little value on the honor which is here done you! do you know that when a man asks a woman to become his wife he confers the greatest possible mark of esteem upon her—he shows that he selects her from all the women in the world? and that is what this poor fellow has done. Surely, Mrs. Carmody, you ought to be at least grateful for the offer."

"Grateful, is it, to Corny O'Toole! oh, yer riverince, it's makin' fun o' me you are!" and Mrs. Carmody's apron went up to her eyes, and in another instant her sobs burst upon the astonished priest.

He waited till she became quiet, his mouth working, however, as if it was with difficulty that he restrained himself from bursting again into laughter. "Well, Mrs. Carmody, you intend, then, to refuse this offer?"

"I do, yer riverince; an' if you knew Corny O'Toole as I know him, you wouldn't spake to me the way you did—an' more, too, that iver I'd see the day whin yer riverince'd be advisin' me to marry agin, afther the good man that I lost, God rist his sowl!"

"You mistake, Mrs. Carmody," said the priest, with assumed gravity; "I did not *advise* you to marry—I only suggested

what might seem to be your duty in the way of gratitude for this honorable offer."

"I'm naythur grateful nor plazed, yer riverince, an' I'll take it as a great favor if you'll write a few loines for me, tellin' Mr. O'Toole that I'll be viry thankful to him if he'll place his attintions somewhere else."

Father Meagher led the way to his study, and penned the following:

"MR. O'TOOLE,

Sir:—Mrs. Carmody desires me to say for her that she has received your favor, and while she thanks you for the honor you would do her, she is obliged to decline your offer.

REV. M. MEAGHER,
for MARY CARMODY."

The old woman expressed herself satisfied, took the letter, thanked the priest, and courtesying deeply, left him.

Captain Dennier reached Tralee to find a letter awaiting him. Its official seal and coat of arms made his heart beat quicker than usual, and he tore it open to learn that his conjecture was right—it was from Lord Heathcote, demanding his immediate presence in Dublin. He bit his lip with resentment at the imperious tone of the missive, and threw it down, when he had finished the perusal, with a deeply flushed cheek and excited manner. He rung for Tighe, saying, when the latter appeared: "I shall have to depart earlier than I thought." He was so absorbed in troubled reflection that he continued to pace the room while he addressed his valet: "When I told you yesterday of my intended journey, I thought to have two or three days in which to complete my arrangements, and to provide for you, Tighe."

"Oh, as to purvidin' for me, yer honor, don't let that throuble you—I was always able to take care o' mesel' at short warnin', an' it's nothin' I moind about this but the losin' o' you. You were viry koind, and Tim Carmody'll niver forgit you!"

There was an accent of touching sincerity in the last words which went to the young officer's heart. He stopped short in his walk, and extended his hand. "And you, my faithful fellow, I feel that I owe you much for your honest service."

Tighe grasped the outstretched member, gave it a hearty shake, and turned aside to control his emotion.

"If you could be induced to come to Dublin, Tighe, I could provide well for you there."

"Don't spake o' it, yer honor, plaze; aside from Shaun, that the climate wouldn't binefit, I couldn't go so far from Dhrommacohol—me heart is there!"

Captain Dennier turned away; the very mention of a spot, the memory of which was at once so sweet and so bitter to him, in some measure unmanned him—he was forced to acknowledge to himself that *his* heart also was in Dhrommacohol.

CHAPTER XLIII.

SINGULAR INTERVIEW.

In one of the apartments of Dublin Castle, where military accouterments, disposed with no neat nor careful hand, and the general air of carelessness prevailing, indicated the abode of some free and easy liver, Captain Crawford reclined at full length on a somewhat worn lounge. A fragrant cigar was between his lips, but after intervals of slow, irregular puffs, during which some pleasant conceit seemed to fill his mind, he would remove the cigar in order to burst into a hearty laugh. In the midst of one of these ebullitions he was surprised by a knock, and to his response there entered Captain Dennier. Captain Crawford bounded to his feet.

"Egad, Dennier! the very one I was thinking about—I was wondering how you got along with that specimen of humanity, Tighe, and laughing at my own experience with him. But how are you, old fellow, and what lucky wind blew you up here now?"

"A summons from Lord Heathcote," the officer responded, returning the hearty shake with which he had been greeted. "It was my intention to come unsummoned, but my arrival in that case should not have been so speedy."

"Lord Heathcote's summons—why—what is the matter? any unusual occurrence?"

Captain Dennier shrugged his shoulders, and threw himself into a chair. "You know as much about it as I do; though I suspect the informer, Carter, has something to do with it. However, it makes little difference to me—my mind is firmly made up. I shall tender my resignation to his lordship."

"You are not in earnest?" burst from Captain Crawford.

"Never more so."

"But what if Lord Heathcote meets you as he did before —you will be obliged to defer again to his wish."

"No; not this time!" and there was a look in the young officer's sparkling eyes, and an accent of determination in his voice, which convinced his hearer. "I must be free," he continued; "I cannot be shackled to a profession which harrows my feelings, which conflicts with my manhood!"

"Well, Dennier," answered Captain Crawford, "it is just as I have said. These rascally Irish have thrown some witchery about you, and won you over; or is there an Irish maiden in the case—now that I remember, Jack Cade, who was up to see me the other day—you remember Jack? he used to be in the Life Guards, you know,—was telling me of some ladies who called upon you at the barracks: two ladies, I believe, accompanied by a gentleman; at least that was the way the gossip of Tralee had it. Oh, don't look so displeased about it"—as Captain Dennier strove to conceal his embarrassment under an appearance of indignation,—"I understand these things, Walter; but seriously, old fellow, I wish it were otherwise with you!"

Captain Dennier arose, and passing his hand over his face as if he would brush from it its troubled expression, he said hastily: "I have reason to suspect that my birth and early childhood have not been what I have been permitted to think them. I fancy that Lord Heathcote can, if he will, give me information on the subject, and I intend to urge him to do so."

Captain Crawford, in the generosity of his friendship, and noting the troubled look of the speaker, became painfully interested. "What are your suspicions?" he asked.

"Do not ask me," responded the young man; "I cannot tell you—I shall not even suffer myself to dwell upon them until I learn the truth."

"And then?" asked Crawford.

"And then," was the agitated response, "I shall seek an

entirely new career, far from all the scenes in which I have mingled. But let us cease to speak upon this subject; it is unaccountably painful to me; and pass the cigars"—straightening himself and trying to assume a cheerful air. "The time for my meeting Lord Heathcote is fixed for four—I have barely an hour."

He remained chatting over the wine and fragrant Havanas which Crawford produced, occasionally catching so much of the latter's convivial spirit as to burst into momentary laughter at some well-told story, and to find himself detailing a ludicrous experience of his life while in Tralee garrison.

"By the way," said Crawford suddenly, "how about that laughable incident which occurred during the trial in Tralee a fortnight ago? some of the papers gave a most amusing account of it. A ridiculous letter, was it not, that was read in place of some Fenian document which should have been forthcoming?"

"Yes," replied Captain Dennier, smiling; "that letter, I believe, took the place of the paper which I, according to his lordship's order, intrusted to you to bring safely to Dublin."

"O-o-oh!" and Captain Crawford's face elongated in accompaniment to his prolonged ejaculation; "that explains all the fuss they have been making here in the castle. I was summoned before some of the grave signors to swear how, and when, and where I delivered that precious document. It is said that the last official to whose care this paper, together with other damning proofs against these rebels, was committed, was taken suddenly ill, and remaining too unwell to discharge his duty with regard to close examination of the papers, the document, detained here longer than it should be, owing to his illness, was sent down to Tralee at the last moment, and without any inspection, further than what was given to the superscription. But who could have abstracted it, and substituted that ridiculous letter in its place?"

"I do not know," was the reply; "it certainly was all right when it passed from my possession to yours—you remember, I read it for you."

"Yes," said Captain Crawford thoughtfully; "and it never left my keeping till I delivered it here at the castle."

"Well, I am not sorry for its loss," responded Dennier; "its absence on the trial has been the means of saving the lives of six poor creatures, and its absence will also benefit the case of the prisoner who is to be tried next week."

"That young rebel, Carroll O'Donoghue?" asked Crawford, an unpleasant expression coming into his face.

Dennier observed the look, and anxious to avoid the conflict which seemed to threaten because of his own frank avowal of compassion for the Fenian prisoners, he hastened to burst into a ludicrous account of Tighe's escapade from the jail yard, and the consternation it had created. His *ruse* succeeded. Crawford, whose sense of humor was unusually keen, laughed heartily.

"What have you done with him?" he asked. "I would give a good, round sum to take him back with me to England. The folks would look with horror, I know, on so uncouth a specimen for a body-servant, but it would be worth it all to watch Tighe's manner, and to hear his ludicrous observations. Tell me, Dennier, what have you done with him?"

"I was spared the trouble of exerting myself at all in his behalf; he is such a general favorite in the barracks, he and his inseparable companion, Shaun, that I believe the very privates would conspire to keep him for sake of the entertainment which he affords them; as it was, Major Capdale said he would find use for him, and so Tighe changed masters, not, however, without some touching signs of his attachment to me. I discovered him at the station—though I had already bade him good-by in the barracks,—superintending the stowing of my baggage, much to the wonder and perplexity of the valet I had that day engaged, and who stood idly by; and when I expressed my surprise and my gratitude for all the trouble he was taking, he whispered"—here Captain Dennier, bending forward, gave an excellent imitation of Tighe's brogue: "'Sure, yer honor, I'm used to yer ways, an' I'm jist

tachin' the perticler dhrift o' thim to the valet you're takin' to Dublin.'"

Captain Crawford laughed again more heartily than before, both at the picture which his own imagination drew of Tighe, and at his visitor's comical imitation of the brogue.

"But I must go," said Captain Dennier, consulting his watch; "Lord Heathcote rarely forgives remissness in punctuality, and I have no desire to anger him at the outset of our meeting." He wrung Crawford's hand, promising to return in the evening, and left for his lordship's apartments.

Lord Heathcote appeared somewhat of an invalid; a great easy chair supported his person in an attitude that betokened weakness, and his face had all the pallor and lines of physical suffering. He returned, by a slight inclination of his head, Dennier's respectful bow when the latter was ushered into the room, and pointed wearily to a chair directly in front of his own. Then, with a painful effort, he sat erect, and fixing his eyes with no diminution of their keen, disconcerting look at the young officer, he said haughtily: "I have received a recent letter detailing an account of an interview which took place between you and a man—a hireling of the government named Mortimer Carter,—the account is not to your credit as an English officer."

He paused as if expecting a reply. The young man was silent, returning the nobleman's look with one well-nigh as stern and undaunted. His lordship resumed:

"You are spoken of as one in secret sympathy with these Irish rebels—as one privy to the disappearance of the paper intrusted to your charge."

Again Lord Heathcote paused, expecting a reply; but again he was met by the same dignified silence—the same unflinching look.

"Have you nothing to say, sir?" he demanded, with some asperity.

"Has your lordship already condemned me?" Captain Dennier responded calmly, though his lip trembled; "have

the charges preferred against me by this hireling, as you term him, carried such weight that your lordship was forced to a conviction before I could be heard in my own defense?"

"I have sent for you, sir, to give you an opportunity of making that defense," replied his lordship, coldly.

Captain Dennier arose; he could no longer control the excitement under which he labored—it betrayed itself in his vivid flush, in his trembling enunciation. "The paper given into my hands I delivered safely into the possession of Captain Crawford—he can testify to that fact, having read the document himself the instant it passed to his charge. For the other accusations which this hireling, Carter, makes against me, I consider the source from whence they spring too low for my notice or denial; does your lordship deign to give them weight, however, I shall attempt no refutation of them."

He stood with so stately an air, his head slightly thrown back, and his dark, splendid eyes alight with noble feeling, that an expression akin to admiration flashed for an instant across Lord Heathcote's face; but it was as suddenly gone, and receiving no answer, Captain Dennier resumed:

"Had your lordship's summons not reached me, I should myself have sought you to learn the truth of the strange inuendoes which this man, Carter, dropped; my heart tells me that you, Lord Heathcote, possess the entire story of my birth and early life. I conjure you, by your honor as a gentleman, to tell me who I am!" His voice quivered painfully.

"Who you are?" his lordship repeated in a somewhat bitter tone. "By what right do you demand from me more knowledge of your origin than you already possess?"

"By the right of your strange interest and patronage; by the right of a mysterious impulse within me which impels me to you—speak, your lordship, and end a suspense which is crushing my manhood!" He bent forward in his eagerness, every fiber of his form vibrating.

"You are dreaming, boy; your imagination has deceived

you—you are simply what you have been told to believe of yourself. The inuendoes of this man, Carter, were perhaps invented for some purpose of his own."

He spoke so lightly, almost mockingly, a scornful curl upon his lip the while, that the young officer sickened for an instant from the bitter disappointment. He turned away, unable to speak.

"Dismiss these vague, morbid fancies," continued the nobleman, "they ill befit a soldier, and concentrate your energies upon the stern duties of the life which lies before you."

"I intend to, my lord." The young man had turned slowly back, and was facing the nobleman with all the eagerness and determination of some violently aroused energy; "I feel that too long I have been the willing dependent on perhaps a misplaced bounty. I stifled energies which cried for outlets in other directions than those proposed by your lordship—I struggled against feelings that told me of my utter inability to cope with circumstances which appealed alike to my heart and my judgment; but I did it all to *prove* my gratitude. Now, however, the time has come when my manhood refuses to be longer crushed; it will assert itself by choosing a life in which duty, principle, inclination shall unite; and it is for the purpose of announcing to you that decision that I am here this morning; but, before I leave you, my lord, before I resign a career which has been so eventful to me, I would fain learn who I am. You have failed to convince me of the falsity of my suspicions—you have failed to lift from my mind the crushing weight of a cruel conjecture!"

Lord Heathcote half started from his chair, but the movement seemed to give him pain, for his brow contracted, and his head fell slightly back. "That conjecture?" he asked.

Captain Dennier paused for an instant, as if he would summon strength to make his intended announcement; then, while the vivid color mounted to his forehead, and his breath

came and went in gasps, he answered: "That I am your illegitimate offspring."

The nobleman bounded from his chair, but with a half-stifled cry of pain he sunk into its cushions again, while an expression of agony broke over his face which the young officer could not bear to look at. He asked hoarsely: "Did this man, Carter, hint at such a possibility?"

"No; it is my own surmise, formed from reflections upon your singular interest in me, together with the strange inuendo from Carter that I was not what I seemed."

"Dennier,"—the nobleman was again partially erect, but his jeweled hand covered his face, as if he would hide its expression of suffering—"if I tell you that you are the legitimate son of one who was near and dear to me, but that the circumstances of your birth are such as to compel perpetual secrecy, what will be your decision with regard to your future mode of life?"

"The same, my lord; but I could kneel to you in gratitude for having taken from my mind its horrible weight. *Legitimate!*—then I can face the world with an honorable birthright. I ask no more; I seek not to penetrate the secret you would hold. I have gained all I craved, and I thank your lordship for the favors of the past, as well as for the happy tidings of the present."

"By resigning your commission," resumed the nobleman, retaining his hand to his face, "you will forego all right to a property which will one day be yours—you will lose the prospect of a magnificent alliance which is already contemplated for you."

He spoke very slowly, as if each word in the utterance was receiving new deliberation in his own mind. The young officer replied: "I am willing to forego all; for I could accept the former of your inducements only at the expense of my principles, the latter at the cost of my affections."

Lord Heathcote looked up, his hand at last removed, and the lines and careworn look of his face standing out with

painful prominence. "Then your affections are already engaged?"

"They are, but hopelessly!"

"May I ask to whom?"

"No, my lord; I cannot tell you—her name has never passed my lips—it is my own unhappy secret."

"But why unhappy?" persisted the nobleman; "does the lady not reciprocate your regard?"

"Unhappily for me, she does not."

"What is the obstacle?" and Lord Heathcote seemed to take a malignant interest in thus pressing his visitor.

"I am the hated foe of her country—a soldier in that service whose boast it is to enslave and to crush her people."

He spoke with unusual warmth, apparently forgetful of everything save his own impatient ardor.

"Ah! I understand,"—and the nobleman's mouth curled with disdain—"a pretty girl is the motive power of all these heroics; I might have surmised before the cause of your wish to resign; but you are now, by your own avowal, averse to the cause you have professed to serve, and you are amenable to arrest." He paused, his searching look reading Captain Dennier through.

"Be it so," said the young man, slightly inclining his head; "give your order, my lord, and I shall be far happier in a prison, knowing that my conduct is consistent with my heart and my judgment, than holding the highest place of honor with every hour bringing some conflicting duty!"

"No, Captain Dennier," responded Lord Heathcote; "I shall treat you with more magnanimity than you deserve—allowing for your youth, and the natural impulsiveness of that mawkish period, I shall pass over your imprudent admissions. Neither shall you resign your commission; retain your command, sir, and bury in your own breast all that has been said during this interview."

"I thank you, my lord, for your great leniency, but, pardon me, I must demand that my resignation be accepted. I

cannot, I *shall* not, longer retain my commission in her Majesty's service."

"Be it so, then!" said the nobleman sternly; "but remember by this headstrong conduct you waive every right to your future inheritance."

The officer bowed.

"And may I ask," the speaker continued, "what is to be your first movement?"

"I shall remain in Dublin for three or four days; then I shall go to England, from whence I intend to seek a home in America."

Lord Heathcote touched the silver hand-bell on the table at his side, and when the attendant entered he waved Captain Dennier away without any further adieu. The young man would have fain had a more kindly parting, or at least one which would have evinced more gratitude upon his part, but the sternness of the nobleman's manner deterred him. He passed out, and Lord Heathcote rung again, saying to the attendant who entered: "Send Curry to me."

The order was obeyed, and Curry, a small, slender-formed, and sharp-visaged man, stood before his titled master.

"Watch Captain Dennier—dog him secretly day and night, and write to me, or telegraph, information of his whereabouts, and what he may be doing. Do not lose sight of him wherever he goes, be it to England or America. You shall be supplied with ample funds, but let your work be secret. Do you understand?"

"Perfectly, my lord."

"That is all;" and the nobleman leaned back with an air of relief, while Curry bowed low, and departed to begin immediately his espionage of Captain Dennier. That gentleman had repaired to Captain Crawford's apartment.

"You look brighter, old fellow," was the salutation of the latter; "your conference, then, has been satisfactory?"

"Yes, in so far as relieving me of a dreadful suspicion—and I have succeeded in my purpose to resign. I shall send

in the written form of my resignation this evening, and from that time I shall consider myself no longer in her Majesty's service."

"By Jove! I am sorry, Walter!" and for an instant something like emotion showed in the working of Crawford's face, but he recovered himself, and resumed: "We have had some pleasant hours together; but when do you go?"

Dennier did not reply immediately, as if he were reluctant to do so; then, as if he had overcome some secret scruple, he said: "I shall return to Tralee for a day or so—I confess to some interest in the approaching trial of the young prisoner, O'Donoghue."

A peculiar expression broke into Crawford's face: "By Jove! Dennier, but I begin to have very strange suspicions—well, never mind, old fellow! I shall not press you on the subject—I know that some of these Irish girls are deuced witching and handsome, and if you have been so desperately caught, it won't be the first time a poor fellow has had his principles and his creed upset by a pretty face. Only I can't help feeling sorry for you; you are renouncing a glorious career, and you are giving way to impulses which the sober judgment of more mature manhood will certainly change."

"It may be so, Harry, but at least I am acting in accordance with my convictions now, and I am the happier for it."

He turned away with a careless air to prepare for the evening dinner to which he had promised to accompany Captain Crawford.

CHAPTER XLIV.

CARTER REPULSED.

THE eventful day of Carroll O'Donoghue's trial arrived. Father Meagher and Clare left Dhrommacohol in the earliest mail-car, and reached Tralee an hour before the opening of the court. They went in immediate search of Nora, only to learn from Mrs. Murphy that the young lady and her father had sought another residence three weeks before, and the good-natured woman was unable to tell them where. With blank faces, and heavier hearts than they had borne thither, they retraced their steps in order to seek places in the now crowded court-room.

All the wealth and fashion, together with the rank and influence of the town, was represented ; the gallery was crowded with ladies, the bench filled with lawyers, the body of the house thronged with a medley of tradesmen, mechanics and farmers, thickly interspersed with the military, while the uniform of the police showed in sufficient numbers to warrant the preservation of order. Every face expressed interest, and many of the countenances, even among the grave visages on the bench, evinced an anxiety that might be construed into secret sympathy with the prisoner.

Clare, her veil down, and her person somewhat shielded by the large form of Father Meagher, who sat slightly in advance of her, was seated directly opposite the prisoner's dock.

On the outskirts of the crowd, yet where, when openings occurred in the latter, she could see the accused, Nora was stationed, her face heavily veiled, and her person shielded by the stooped, shambling form of Rick of the Hills.

Breathless interest prevailed when the prisoner entered.

Firm, erect, with his wonted noble poise and fearless look, he took his place in the dock; but when he faced the concourse the ravages of his confinement and anxiety could be plainly seen—the intense pallor, the transparency of his face, the lines worn in his features, the unnatural luster of his large eyes, all were painfully disclosed.

Clare raised her veil in answer to his gaze, that wandered searchingly over the court-room, and immediately succeeding the glance of joyful recognition which he gave to her and Father Meagher, came one of weary disappointment; both the priest and his young companion sadly divined the cause —it was the absence of Nora, and they read in his continued frequent and anxious glance the alarming conjectures which filled his mind.

Nora, too, had raised her veil, and bent forward to obtain a full view of the prisoner; she saw his gaze wandering over the court-room, the expression of disappointment which came into his face, and she, too, divined the cause. She fell back, pulling her veil down, and for one whirling moment, while her heart seemed bursting with renewed agony, she murmured: "My God! that I were dead!" but the next instant, in deep remorse for her rebellious expression, she added: "Not my will, but Thine, be done."

The trial was fairly opened, and as it progressed, more developments in favor of the prisoner were produced than had been generally anticipated. Direct proof of his connection with the I. R. B. organization was wanting, owing to the abstraction of the paper by Tighe a Vohr; and his counsel cited, as one of the points in the defense, the fact of the accused refusing to escape when every door which separated him from freedom had been secretly opened for his release. Faces brightened, and Clare's countenance flushed with excited joy as she heard point after point made in favor of her brother. Nora also breathed freer, and more than once in the ardor of her feelings she forgot herself and threw aside her veil, only, however, to drop it, abashed, when she

caught some curious eyes fixed upon her. But there was one in the thickest of the crowd to whom the progress of the trial afforded only disappointment and bitterness—Morty Carter; his scowling, empurpled face, empurpled from his secret rage, betrayed plainly the purport of his feelings.

The case was at length adjourned until the following day.

Rick and Nora hurried out, mingling with the crowd which pressed about them until they could find an opportunity of turning down one of the obscure side streets that led to their home; while Father Meagher and Clare, loth to return without some information of Nora, again sought Mrs. Murphy, thinking to glean by further questioning some clew which might lead them to her whereabouts. But this visit was as fruitless as the former one had been; the kind-hearted landlady had nothing more to communicate than a glowing eulogium on Nora's sweetness of manner, her own reflections on the contrast presented by the father and daughter, and upon their apparent poverty. She was about to reveal, as she had already been on the point of doing that morning, how the young lady had been obliged to dispose of some of her wardrobe, but she remembered in season her promise of secrecy regarding that matter—a promise which Nora, probably foreseeing this visit of her friends, had exacted. So the two anxious inquirers with very sad hearts turned their faces toward Dhrommacohol, which they would leave again for Tralee on the next morning. Father Meagher anxiously thought what forces he could exert in order to find Nora. He fancied he knew the cause of her silence, and her mysterious disappearance—that both were due to the wretched haunt to which Rick had gone, and to which she, in her noble devotion, had accompanied him. His heart burned with indignation for a moment against Rick; but the next instant his anger softened, for the image of the poor creature, as he had looked when kneeling in the study pleading his love for his child, rose before him, and the tender-hearted priest murmured a prayer for Nora's protection, and for poor, miserable Rick's conversion

Nora was alone, thinking of the trial of the morning; every word of the evidence seemed burned upon her brain, and though her fingers rapidly plied the needle which formed such shining stitches in her skillful work, her industry was entirely mechanical—her thoughts were so distant from her employment, and they were so wild and troubled.

Rick had left her after their little frugal meal, which her hands had prepared, to seek the pittance that he sometimes earned, and she had full scope for all her unhappy reflections. She was suddenly startled by a rap; no visitors ever came to them, and with a wildly bounding heart she answered the summons. It was Morty Carter. He was smiling, fulsome, and arrayed in such elegance as his own vulgar taste dictated. Nora shrunk from him in alarm and horror. He pursued her into the room, first turning to close the door behind him.

"Miss McCarthy—pardon me, Miss Sullivan—do not fear me; I intend you no harm. Listen"—as she still cowered from him, retreating to the farthest corner of the apartment, —"I have come to save you, to rescue you from poverty, from shame. Be my wife—fly with me, Nora, and you shall have all that money can furnish! I have already riches, and I expect still more."

He paused for want of breath to continue. Sudden and almost supernatural courage seemed to animate the girl; ceasing to cower, she confronted him with an indignation before which it was his turn to quail for a moment.

"Cease, Mr. Carter, and no longer disgrace your manhood; if you are so lost to honor and feeling as to insult an unprotected woman, I have courage at least to defy you!" She had the poise of a queen, the courage of a lioness. "Become your wife!" she continued; "twice before you have made that insulting proffer, and twice you have received your answer. To save me! from what would you save me—my poverty?—it is honorable, and were it ten times as great, it would be far preferable to the fate of being *your* wife: shame?—I have none, sir, save the shame of being forced to

endure your presence. Leave me!" She pointed to the door.

"Nora, hear me!" He approached her, attempting to seize her hand. She receded from him, maintaining her fearless air.

"Stop!" she cried, in a tone that he was forced to obey. "Dare but to lay a finger upon me, and Heaven itself will interpose to check you!"

At that instant the door was flung suddenly open, and Rick of the Hills entered. One rapid glance conveyed to him the meaning of the scene. "Back!" he cried to Carter, and his threatening brow and outstretched hand gave a fierce and determined meaning to his words.

"Faith, it's a pretty touchy pair ye are!" said Carter, endeavoring to hide his discomfiture under a semblance of humor; "I came here with the best of intentions, and this is the way I'm received—turned out before I have time to state the object of my visit. Ugh!" and he wiped his face with a handkerchief whose crimson color was scarcely deeper than the countenance it pressed.

"Why have you come?" demanded Rick, with no diminution of his stern and angry manner; "we were getting on well without you, and we do not need you."

There was a hidden significance in his words which Carter too well understood.

"Oh, come, Mr. Sullivan," he said, in a conciliatory tone; it was the first time he had ever used so respectful a term to Rick, but it was evidently lost upon the latter, for his lip curled, and his whole haggard face expressed his disdain of the speaker. "Let me explain myself," continued Carter, assuming his blandest air; "I have come with the honorable purpose of a gentleman to offer to you both a life of independence and comfort—it requires but one condition: that Nora here will become my wife."

Nora sprung to Rick's side; for the first time since he had so sternly forbade her to touch him, her hands were upon

him, clasping his arm. "Father,"—the agony in her voice pierced the heart of the poor wretch—"do not let him longer insult me—send him hence, for I cannot bear this—indeed I cannot!"

Her appearance attested the truth of her words; her suddenly acquired strength and courage had as suddenly gone, and her pallid face and trembling form told of the painful reaction which had followed.

"You hear your answer," said Rick, "and I, too, bid you begone!"

But Carter made no motion to obey. He evidently did not believe in Rick's determination—he could not realize that Nora's influence, won through her noble devotion, had superseded his own old, evil power over the unhappy creature, and he waited with a brazen confidence of being still able to accomplish the object of his visit.

"Go to your own room," whispered Rick to Nora, "and leave me to deal with this man."

Too glad to obey, the excited girl flew to her little apartment, shutting and locking the door upon herself.

The two men confronted each other; Rick hissed, but in too low a tone to reach her who had just left them: "Do you believe me now, Morty Carter? I told you before you would never win her, but you scouted my words."

"You have thwarted me!" answered Carter, in as low a tone.

"Never! I have been your tool up to the present moment, sending my soul down to hell for your promised reward; but your purpose is to prove as treacherous to me as you have done to those it was your sworn duty to defend."

Carter replied doggedly: "I shall keep my word with you when Nora consents to become my wife."

"She will never become such."

"She will," was the angry, but still cautiously-spoken reply, "if you will leave me to pursue my suit without your interference—in a word, if you will help me,"—and the little ferret-

like eyes looked significantly into the wild flashing orbs before them.

"Never!" hissed Rick; "and what is more, I shall protect her from you; there is many a crime upon my soul, Morty Carter, but the sin of delivering into your hands so pure and noble a being as Nora shall not stain it. In everything else I have done your bidding, but in that I never shall!"

"And what of Cathleen?" said Carter, in his anger slightly raising his voice.

"Not even for her shall I do your bidding with regard to Nora!"

Carter's rage seemed beyond his control—his large form trembled, and his hands, according to their wonted habit, clutched convulsively. "What if I open up your secrets to the world?" he hissed; "what if I tear off the mask which you now wear?"

"I could not be more wretched than I am," was the reply; "I have tasted so much bitterness under my present mask that it will be a relief to tear it off. I grant you free license to pull it away, Morty Carter—to publish all that you know; but remember"— for an instant Rick also forgetfully raised his voice,—"that I too hold secrets which the world shall have; that you also wear a mask which it is in my power to tear off!"

Carter, in his baffled rage, bit his lip till the blood came. "Rick," said he at last, when he had apparently conquered himself, "I have been, as I always am, too hasty with you; surely you will not play me false—you do not intend to desert me?"

"If playing you false, and deserting you, means saving *her* from your insulting presence"—he pointed to the room within which Nora had locked herself,—"then I intend to do both."

Again Carter bit his lip. "You will not help me to press my suit?" he said bitterly.

Rick shook his head.

"What has changed you, Rick? you worked in accord

with all my plans until this—this one last stroke, which would bring me the fulfillment of all my wishes, and you the possession of Cathleen."

"Would you know what has changed me, Carter?—Nora's goodness. I have looked at her sometimes, wondering if she were not more an angel than a woman, and I have loathed myself for suffering her so near me!" He folded his arms, and with his old habit let his head fall sadly upon his breast.

"Well, Rick, bear with it all till Carroll O'Donoghue's trial is over; I shall not intrude my presence upon your home again; and here—take this money; I am in better condition to afford it than I was when you last asked me for it." He had taken his porte-monnaie out, and was proceeding to open it.

"Put your purse back," said Rick, "we want none of your money; when I asked you for it, you drove us to poverty, and now Nora earns for us."

Carter's eyes opened to a wider stare than from their shrunken size they seemed able to do.

"It is true," continued Rick, replying to that look of angry surprise; "and were it in your power to offer me the wealth of Ireland's bank, Morty Carter, I would not touch a ha'penny of it!"

Without a word, Carter put up his porte-monnaie, gave one look toward the room into which Nora had retired, a sharper look at Rick, and strode toward the door; on the threshold he turned to say: "When you think better of this, Rick, you know where to find me." He hurried out, disappointment and rage choking him, and he loosened his cravat and flung his coat back, as if he would thus give vent to his bitter and stifling emotions. "At least I can crush them," he muttered, "and nothing shall stop me this time—I *shall* crush them!" He ground his teeth together and quickened his pace.

CHAPTER XLV.

A CRIMINATING PAPER.

CARROLL O'DONOGHUE had returned to his cell, weary and dispirited, on the first day of his trial; he was not buoyed up by the hope which others entertained regarding him—he was scarcely even animated by it, for his mind was racked by wild conjectures about Nora: that she was ill was his first fear, and he tried to comfort himself by thinking that if it was very serious Clare would not have left her. But a strange misgiving tormented him—he could not account for it, he could not explain it—he only knew that a mysterious fear of some ill having happened pressed upon him, and he passed the heavy hours in a dispiriting mood which he could neither banish nor lessen. In the evening of that day his cell door opened, and Morty Carter was admitted. The visit was like a ray from Heaven to the poor prisoner—the sight of one whom he deemed so true to his interests—and he sprung to meet him, his face aglow, his form trembling with delighted eagerness. Had Carter any lingering fear of his treachery having been revealed to Carroll, the latter's welcome at once dissipated it; and thus re-assured, he returned the prisoner's greeting apparently with all the warmth of a sincere affection.

"I felt you would come, Morty," said the young man, "and I looked for you every day since the night of my unfortunate attempt to escape."

"Yes," answered Carter; and he pretended to gasp, as if in the very thought of his failure on that occasion there was a threat of one of the spasms of pain which Carroll had before witnessed; "that faithful fellow, Tighe a Vohr, was barely in time to warn you back to your cell, was he not? I

do not know how I should have managed on that night but for him—the discovery of my plan came to me by such providential chance, and there seemed to be no way to get you timely word. I met Tighe, and told him; in a moment he had an idea, and you, my dear boy, were saved, and Tighe, as he always does, got beautifully out of the difficulty."

"And the brave fellows who were waiting without for me—what of them?" asked Carroll.

"They have been sentenced to imprisonment and hard labor, but it is hoped that they will be pardoned before the expiration of their time."

Carroll's face fell. "Could I suffer entirely alone," he said sadly, "my pain would lose much of its sting; but when through me punishment is inflicted upon others, it is a double stab to my own heart, Morty!" His tone became suddenly eager: "You were in the court-room to-day—tell me where was Nora? she did not accompany Father Meagher and my sister."

"I know not, my dear boy; you forget that I am banned by all save you—that my presence is shunned as an evil thing. I marked her absence, but I did not dare to inquire the cause."

"Ah, yes! I did forget," replied Carroll sadly; then, as if influenced by some sudden thought, he continued: "But you can learn from Tighe—you will do so, and you will let me know to-morrow—will you, Morty?" speaking with renewed animation.

"Certainly, my dear boy; but how if I am not admitted to your cell to-morrow—my visit to-night has cost me labor, and time, and invention, and if it was suspected by the authorities that I was friendly to your interests, your prison door would be as closed to me as it is to Father Meagher and your sister. You know, my poor fellow, that they are even more particular since the unfortunate failure of that attempt to escape—so particular, that even I, with all the influence I thought I could command, was unable to gain access to you from that time until to-night!"

Carroll bowed his head in bitter resignation.

"Do you know, my dear boy," continued Carter, "that the strongest hopes are entertained of your case? it appears you have attracted the sympathy and interest of some of the highest officials. The fact of your having remained quietly in your cell, as it has appeared on your trial that you did, when every avenue to release was opened before you, has told wonderfully in your favor; and it is a current belief that your sentence will be comparatively light. In view of that"—he drew nearer to the prisoner, and dropped his voice to still more of a whisper,—"the boys are hopeful of your speedy ultimate escape—your escape in time to take an active part in the organization which is going rapidly forward in America. When that was proposed," Carter continued, "proposed as a plan which would insure your safety, and allow scope for your patriotism, one dissenting voice was raised—one voice which said: 'Once Carroll O'Donoghue is free, he will gladly bid adieu to the cause, and turn his face to America, for the sole purpose of insuring his own safety.'"

Carroll's cheeks hotly flushed.

"I gave him the lie, Carroll," Carter continued, "I hurled the infamous slander in his teeth; for I knew my own boy too well not to swear that he would rot in his prison, aye, die on the scaffold, before he would forsake the cause of his poor, downtrodden country!"

"And you did well, Morty; I thank you from my heart!" And the poor prisoner warmly shook both of his visitor's hands.

"I did more, Carroll: I swore to them that I would bring, written in your own hand, an expression of your sentiments which should give the lie to this libel upon your character—I promised them that they should read for themselves the heart of the man who was thus cowardly defamed!"

"Instantly, Morty; you shall bear back to them how unchanged are my feelings—how deep is my love for Ireland!" He bounded from his seat in pained and angry excitement,

but suddenly stopped short, exclaiming in a vexed and disappointed tone: "I cannot write—I have no materials!"

"I have them," said Carter, and he pulled pen, ink and paper from one of his breast pockets; "knowing what I should ask of you, how could you think I would come unprovided?"

The feeble rays of the little lamp afforded scarcely sufficient light for Carroll to pen the burning words which sprung from his heart, but he wrote them, however, in large, trembling characters, and handed them to his visitor.

The latter read them, pretending, when he had finished the perusal, to be too deeply affected to speak; and he folded the paper and put it carefully into his bosom.

"The name of the man who thought I could be thus false?" demanded the prisoner.

"One who does not personally know you—a late-comer into the circle, and whose opinion was probably based upon the fact of your willingness to be smuggled to America; but his conjecture seemed to acquire weight with others like himself, and, in order to give the whole a direct lie, it entered into my mind to say to them what I have told you. I must leave now"—consulting his watch,—"and I shall allow no stone to remain unturned in the effort which I shall make to get you some word of Nora to-morrow; so keep up your courage, and all will be well." He wrung the prisoner's hand, signaled for egress, and departed.

Another day of the trial passed, having, however, no very marked result. A number of witnesses were questioned and cross-questioned, and an amount of evidence elicited, but nothing to prove decisively, as the counsel for the crown labored hard to do, the identification of the prisoner with fresh treason since his escape from Australia. Again there was an adjournment of the case, and the people poured forth, Rick and Nora, as on a previous occasion, hurrying to escape notice, and Father Meagher and Clare hastening to take the car back to Dhrommacohol.

For the first time in his life Tighe a Vohr, during these two days of the trial, had avoided being seen by the priest and Clare. Watching them from an obscure corner of the court-room, noting Nora's absence with as heavy a heart as that which was borne by those who so fondly loved her, and reading in the faces of the clergyman and his fair companion a touching grief and anxiety, he shrunk from meeting them, for he felt, to express his own words: "that he should only make a fool o' himsel' with his blubbering." And now that he was unable to help his beloved young master, to speak a word of hope to the tender hearts he would have comforted, he felt alone like hiding himself, and telling his grief to dumb affectionate Shaun. Father Meagher fain would have found Tighe a Vohr, feeling that the latter's shrewdness and wit would be effectual in discovering Nora; but Tighe had too securely hidden himself, and the anxious clergyman, and his equally anxious companion, turned their faces dejectedly homeward.

Toward the evening of that day Tighe suddenly encountered Captain Dennier, in the dress of a civilian, and just issuing from the coffee-room of the "Blennerhasset Arms."

"Why, Tighe, my faithful fellow, how are you?" and the shapely hand of the aristocratic gentleman seized Tighe's brown, hard palm in a cordial clasp. "I have just returned from Dublin," the captain continued, "and I intend to remain a few days—I am stopping here,"—glancing at the hotel.

Tighe's eyes were wandering with a surprised look over the civilian dress. Captain Dennier understood the look.

"Ah!" he said, smiling, "I am a man again you see, Tighe, and not an officer—having resigned her Majesty's service, I am no longer *Captain* Dennier."

Tighe a Vohr's eyes and mouth opened in astonishment.

"Never mind being so surprised about it," laughed the gentleman, "but tell me how you have been getting on."

"Sorry enough," answered Tighe; "Major Claptail"—from the first Tighe had ludicrously twisted the name, much to the amusement of the military subordinates—"hasn't the

regard for Shaun that yer honor had ; but how an' iver, it'll do —mebbe there's worse places than Claptail's ! "

"I have no doubt of it," said Dennier, laughing.

Tighe looked as if he would like to say something, but lacked the courage ; he glanced into the gentleman's face, then down to the ground, then on all sides of him, with a puzzled, somewhat confused air, and all the time he worked his hands in a bashful, awkward way.

The captain seemed to divine his desire, for after watching him a moment, he said : "Can I do anything for you, Tighe ? "

Tighe a Vohr's face brightened. "You can that, Captain Dennier—forgive me for givin' you yer title shtill, but it comes readiest to me tongue : if you'll get permission from the governor o' the jail for me to see the prisoner, Mr. O'Donoghue, I'll pray, yer honor, that yer sowl may be in Heaven afore yer fate are cowld ! "

The young man did not answer for a moment ; then, passing his hand over his face as if he would thus brush away some painful thought, he said : "You are deeply interested in this poor prisoner, Tighe ? "

The tone in which the last remark was made, the expression in the dark eyes of the speaker, convinced Tighe of what he had for some time suspected—that the young ex-officer was well-nigh as deeply interested in the poor prisoner as was Tighe himself.

"I am, yer honor, an' it'll make me heart as loight as a feather to see him once more ! "

"Come with me," said the gentleman, "and I shall see what I can do for you." He turned abruptly, and walked with a rapid pace in the direction of the jail. Tighe followed, waiting, when they had arrived at the prison, in one of the outer rooms, while Dennier was closeted with the governor. In a comparatively short time the order came for Tighe a Vohr to be conducted to Carroll's cell.

The poor, pale prisoner started up with wild delight when he beheld his visitor. "Tighe, my faithful, faithful Tighe a

Vohr!" Emotion would let him say no more, and the affectionate Tighe was as deeply affected. "Morty, I suppose, has sent you," Carroll said, when he recovered his voice; "he promised to leave no stone unturned in his efforts to get me word of Nora—he said he would find you, and learn from you of her whereabouts; and I suppose, as he could not come himself to me, he has managed to gain admission for you."

"Is it Morty Carther you mane?" replied Tighe, contemptuously,—"that ould thraitor to get lave for me to visit yer cell! faith, it's chokin' me, an' not wid butther aythur, he'd rather be doin' this minit!"

"Tighe," said Carroll, sternly, "do you, too, believe the lies that have been told of poor Carter? I thought, from the very fact of his deputing you to warn me not to escape the other night, that you, at least, were his friend!"

Tighe's face twisted itself into a most comical expression, and his lips emitted a half-suppressed whistle, meant to be expressive of his amazement at the revelation which had burst suddenly and clearly upon him. "Oh! that's it!" he said, lengthening each word,—"so that ould knave has been here, jist as I thought he would, playin' his double game upon you! Tell me, masther, dear, what he said to you."

"Now, Tighe, this is too bad—that you too should believe these infamous slanders of the poor fellow! He has proved himself my more than friend, not alone in planning my escape the other night, but in taking care of my reputation with those who should think better things of me!" and then, not deeming that the former pledge of secrecy which Carter had extracted from him was binding in this instance, he detailed the whole of his interview with Carter, even to the recounting of the contents of the paper which he had given to the miscreant.

"Och, masther dear, you are lost!" and Tighe, in his agony, was on his knees at Carroll's feet; "that paper'll be used agin you on the thrial—you're gone—you're gone!" The blubbering of which the poor fellow seemed to be so much afraid on other occasions, now earnestly began.

"Hush!" commanded Carroll, "and stop this instantly; you are letting your heart run away with your head. I tell you, Tighe, Morty is as true to my interests as you are—he has sworn it to me here; and when I remember his distress when he detailed to me those wretched reports, I am more than convinced. No!" waxing warmer in his defense,—"it is horribly false—I shall not believe a word of it!"

"Sworn to you," repeated Tighe; "sure that ould thraitor no more moinds the takin' o' a false oath than I'd moind callin' Shaun to me! oh, masther dear, listen to me while I tell you!"

"I'll listen to nothing," interrupted Carroll; "you shall not say one word against him in my presence!"

"Och, wirra asthru! but what'll become o' us all?" and Tighe wrung his hands in fruitless agony.

"Come, Tighe," said his master soothingly, "stop this folly, and tell me about Nora."

"I can't," answered Tighe sadly, shaking his head.

The prisoner's wildest alarm was immediately aroused. "Tighe"—placing his hand heavily on Tighe a Vohr's shoulder,—"I beg of you—I command you—to tell me of Nora! she is dead?" he almost screamed, as Tighe, still refusing to speak, continued to shake his head. "Tell me," he pleaded; "I shall go mad if you do not speak!"

Tighe could not longer resist that frenzied entreaty, and he blurted out: "Rick o' the Hills came an' claimed her as his daughther, an' she has gone to live wid him."

The tidings seemed to paralyze the poor prisoner—for a moment he could not speak; and Tighe slightly shrunk before the wild, burning gaze of his large bright eyes. "*Rick of the Hills Nora's father, and she has gone to live with him!*" he repeated slowly at last. "Oh, God!" He held his clasped hands before his face, as if he would shut out the sight of his beautiful, peerless affianced being the daily companion of such a man.

"Don't take on so, masther dear!" said Tighe, dashing

away the big tears which filled his eyes; "I'm sure her love for you is none the liss, an' it's tramplin' on her heart she is in the givin' up o' you."

"*Giving up of me!*" dashing his hands from his face, and speaking in a terrified tone—"why should she give *me* up?"

"Don't you undhersthand it, masther dear? she has such foine, noble falin's that she wouldn't have you marry her now whin she's *his* daughther."

A new light shone in Carroll's eyes, a new expression came into his face, as if he had made some sudden discovery. "Tighe," he said, seizing the latter's two hands, "see Nora for me, and tell her that if she would break my heart, if she would see the grave close upon me before even the scaffold can claim its victim, to persist in this cruel determination; tell her that she would be the same to me though her parents might be the vilest in God's creation; tell her that my love is for herself, and that it is as unchangeable as eternity!"

"I will, I will, masther dear!" said Tighe, and anxious to break from so harrowing a scene, he was scarcely sorry that the guard was at the door announcing that the time allotted for the visit was ended. With an embrace from which both parted with moist eyes, Tighe tore himself away.

CHAPTER XLVI.

A BOLD VENTURE.

OUTSIDE the prison wall Tighe paused for a moment to deliberate; then he hurried in the direction of the "Blennerhasset Arms." He found, to his satisfaction, that Captain Dennier, as the gentleman was still to Tighe, had already returned to the hotel, and on learning of the latter's desire to see him, ordered that he should be immediately admitted to him.

"You saw the prisoner?" questioned the gentleman, wondering a little what could be the purport of this evidently hurried visit.

"I did, an' I'm viry thankful to yer honor for the great favor you done me; but I've a quistion to ax, an' the answerin' o' it, if yer honor doesn't considher it too bould, 'll be a great settlemint o' me falin's."

"Well, Tighe, what is it?"

"Supposin' now, Captain Dennier, that an informer—a man who was playin' a double part, purtindin' to be the frind o' the prisoner an' the frind o' the governmint,—was to go into the poor, unsuspectin' prisoner an' to win from him in writin' a shtatemint that's enough to hang the poor craythur—supposin', now, that was done late this afthernoon, in view o' the thrial that'll be goin' on to-morrow, could the informer make use o' that paper to-noight, or would he be loikely to kape it till the mornin'?"

A peculiar smile played upon Captain Dennier's features. "I think I can read your riddle, Tighe," he said: "some informer has won admission to Mr. O'Donoghue, and obtained the statement of which you speak; and you think

if the paper does not leave the informer's possession until the morning you shall be able perhaps to get it."

"Faith yer honor has the clarest head for guissin' o' any gintleman in the counthry—that's jist it? I'll make no concalemint o' the matther, for I know I can thrust yer honor."

"Well, Tighe, this informer, whoever he be, will rather be obliged to retain the paper until the morning, for the authorities to whom he might give it would hardly suffer themselves to be disturbed by such business after hours, and especially as it is a matter that can be attended to as well in the morning."

"Thank yer honor—I'm grateful intoirely, an' me loife-long prayer'll be that you may proshper in love an' war!"

"What is it you propose doing?" asked Dennier.

"Plaze don't ax me, yer honor, for I haven't it well settled yet—it's only a thought, but I'll thry what's in it."

"Well, Tighe, you have my best wishes for its success!" and Dennier turned away, his mind suddenly reverting to the story which Tighe had told of how his exit from the jail yard had been effected on the night of the attempted release of the prisoner, and for the first time the truth of the matter flashed upon him. "Ah!" he said to himself, "that was all a preconcerted plan of this faithful fellow, and I doubt not, as he succeeded in that, so will he succeed in the carrying out of this 'thought,' as he calls it. Well, Carroll O'Donoghue has a truer follower than it is the good fortune of most men to find."

Tighe, not even pausing to call for Shaun, who had been confined, very unwillingly, the greater part of the day in the barracks, hastened to the abode of Corny O'Toole. He had absented himself from the little man for some days, fearing that the latter might have received an indignant answer to his letter to Mrs. Carmody, for since the old woman had announced her intention of taking it to Father Meagher, Tighe a Vohr well knew that his reverence would be good-natured enough to write a reply which would give entire satisfaction to

his mother. And his fear with regard to Corny was verified, for Tighe was not well within the room when the little man, with most woe-begone face and distressing air, drew forth Father Meagher's missive written in behalf of Mrs. Mollie Carmody, and he read it for Tighe.

"Tut, tut," said Tighe a Vohr, "is that all that ails you? Why thin, Corny O'Toole, is it you that's in it to be cast down be thim few words? why, man aloive! where's yer brains? don't you see it's the praste that writes that? sure she'd be ashamed to let his riverince know that she'd be thinkin' o' marryin' agin; an' thin she was vexed that you'd put the loike o' what you did in writin' whin you knowed she hadn't larnin' enough to rade it. No, Corny; it's go to her you should, an' tell her wid yer own captivatin' tongue the falin's you have for her; but it's not too late yet, me boy—you'll do the business roight afther awhile or so, an' one o' these days we'll have a tarin' weddin' down there in Dhrommacohol, wid Father Meagher to do the jinin' o' the couple—eh, Corny?" and a vigorous slap between Corny's shoulders gave evidence of the speaker's energy.

The little man brightened; once more hope filled his heart, and his melancholy air gave place to sudden liveliness.

"I have business on hand," said Tighe, assuming a serious tone, "and I want your help, Corny." He dropped his voice, and detailed the plan which he had conceived for the foiling of Carter.

"It is a great undertaking," said Corny.

"But I'll do it," repeated Tighe, "if you'll sthand by **me.**"

"Never fear me, Tighe—I'll do *my* part!"

Then followed whispered directions from Tighe a Vohr, to which Corny nodded assent, and when the whispering ceased the little man departed on some errand.

Tighe proceeded to make sundry changes in his toilet, donning some of Corny's garments, and in his efforts to increase their length, stretching and tugging at them till the well-worn material gave way and left rents which it taxed his ingenuity

to conceal. When at length he was fully dressed, the sight which he presented was such as to make himself burst into a fit of hearty laughter—his pantaloons were so short as to appear like knee-breeches, only cut oddly out of the style of that garment, while their extreme width about the upper part of the body gave a most comical rotundity to Tighe's slender person. The coat was wide enough to look as if the wind might blow him out of it, while at the same time it was so short in the body that its swallow tails were but little below the wearer's waist. One of Corny's slouched, low-crowned hats covered Tighe's brown curls, and being pulled forward, somewhat concealed his face. The little man on his return expressed his admiration of the change which had been effected, and he proceeded to give Tighe a little package, which the latter immediately opened, saying :

"Now, Corny, while I'm busy wid this, do you write what we were spakin' av."

Mr. O'Toole sat down to his table, covered as usual with literary appurtenances, and Tighe proceeded deftly to dye his face and hands. Both tasks were completed about the same time, and the little man, with his usual dramatic gesture, read this latest production of his imagined wonderful genius. Tighe expressed his satisfaction, and after a brief delay while Mr. O'Toole was busy with *his* toilet, only to the extent, however, of polishing his face with soap and water, and brushing his hair, the two went forth together.

"You know where he stops?" questioned Corny.

"Yes ; didn't Mr. Hoolahan say the addhress to me the day all the perlace was afther me, whin the wimen in the kitchen dhressed me loike one o' thimsel's?"

"And if he's not in?" said Corny again.

"Thin we'll wait, if we wait till mornin' for him."

Mr. O'Toole went in alone to the house in which Morty Carter lodged, and was met by the information that Mr. Carter had not been in all day. He repaired without to report to Tighe.

"Well," was the latter's answer, "you wait widin for him, an' I'll watch for him here, so that I'll know whin he inters, an' I'll be on hand for you to call me whin you're ready."

Corny went back to wait in the little untidy parlor, and an hour before midnight Carter returned, somewhat under the influence of liquor. He scowled at the queer little figure which presented itself before him, but Corny, with his most polite air, bowed and said: "Mr. Carter, I believe."

"Yes," was the gruffly spoken response; "what is your business with me?"

"I think this will tell you quicker and better than words"—and Corny proffered the paper which he had written in obedience to Tighe's direction.

Carter took it, walking unsteadily to the light, and read with strained eyes the following:

"MR. CARTER:

The bearer can give you information of the Fenian document which has been missing from the recent trials; he will confer with you, and if you can come to reasonable terms, he will let you have possession of it, as it will be of great importance on the present trial."

There was neither signature nor date.

Carter's little eyes lost their half-drunken stare, and snapped with eagerness; he was all aglow in a moment. "Who are you?" he asked.

"Never mind who I am," responded Corny, speaking in a whisper; "the document was got from Tighe a Vohr, and if you will take me where we can be more private than this, we'll talk over the matter; I have a grudge against that same Tighe a Vohr, and glad enough I am to have an opportunity for a little revenge!"

"Come up-stairs to my room," said Carter, who seemed to have become sober at once; and he led the way rapidly to his own apartment.

"You see, Mr. Carter," said Corny, in a tone of eager confidence, when both were seated, "there were two of us con-

cerned in the stealing of that document from Tighe a Vohr; and my friend, who holds it, isn't willing to let it go without making something by it—and as it's of importance for this trial against the prisoner, he thought you'd be willing to pay something for it."

"How much does your friend want?" asked Carter, his anxiety betraying itself in his voice.

"Well, how much would you be willing to give?—or, stay a moment—perhaps I could induce him to come up and see you. He's a queer, shy fellow, and he wouldn't come in with me; but he's waiting for me at the corner beyond. May be I could get him to come up—shall I try?"

"I'll go down with you," said Carter, rising, and looking for his hat.

"It wouldn't do," answered Corny; "if he saw you with me, he's such a frightened, nervous fellow, he'd think may be you were going to force him into giving the paper, or that you were going to set the law on him—no; the only way is to let me try and bring him up."

"Well," said Carter, resuming his seat, "do so."

Corny feigned to be calm, and even slow, about his movements, shutting the door of Carter's room behind him, and descending the stair as if the semi-darkness—the entry light had not been quite extinguished, out of respect to Mr. Carter's visitor—caused him to grope and stumble. He met Tighe directly without the hall door.

"It's all right, so far," he whispered; "he's waiting for you to come up, in order to make terms for the document."

They both entered the house, Corny leading the way to Carter's room; he ascended slowly, and looked cautiously to ascertain if the door of the room was closed as he had left it. It was; he signified that fact to his companion, and Tighe paused to draw from his pocket a sponge and a vial, partially saturating the former with the contents of the latter. Then Corny, with a knock which he did not wait to have answered, entered Carter's room. The occupant was still

seated, his arms folded, and his head inclined. There was a sudden springing forward of some one in Corny's rear, and before Carter could recover his startled senses, he was pinioned in his chair, and the sponge held to his nose. A stupor seized him—he fell back like a log, almost overturning his chair; and Tighe, drawing a rope from his pocket, proceeded to bind him.

"Quick!" he said to Corny, "sarch his pockets—the stupor mayn't last long."

Corny obeyed, turning out pocket after pocket of Carter's capacious garments, and nervously reading in a loud whisper the contents of every paper he found; but the latter comprised only business memoranda—no document contained anything like the words which he had heard Carroll repeat.

"We're too late," said Tighe, in a tone of bitter despondency; "he's given it to some o' the authorities, onless it could be hid somewhere in the room." He glanced doubtingly about him.

"Wait awhile," said Corny; "we haven't done searching him yet; sometimes a man has secret pockets in his breast," and with trembling haste he tore open Carter's vest. There, in an inner pocket, he found a folded paper.

Carter gave signs of returning consciousness, but Tighe's sponge was instantly to his nostrils, and the heavy form relapsed into stupor. Corny read:

"The undersigned swears that his fealty to Ireland's cause is unchanged, that his loyalty as a sworn member of the Irish Republic Organization is undiminished, and that, declaring himself an open enemy to the English Government, he is ready to die in the defense of his country.

CARROLL O'DONOGHUE."

"That will do!" and Tighe seized the paper, concealed it upon his person, and unbinding Carter, extinguished the light. Then both men stole softly down the stair and from the house, and both were exulting over their success in Corny O'Toole's little apartment by the time that Carter recovered

from the effect of the narcotic which had been administered to him. His restoration was slow, and the darkness in which he found himself seemed to convince him for a while that he had fallen asleep in his chair, and dreamed the whole of the incidents which he was beginning to remember in an indistinct and confused manner. By degrees all came fully to him--his strange visitor, the return of the latter with a companion, the sudden bounding of some one to him, the vise-like grip in which he was held—and that was all. He recalled the face of his visitor perfectly—but of the face of the latter's companion he could remember nothing, save that it was a colored face. He roused himself and called for help; in a brief time the whole household was about him, frightened men and women half dressed, and with their lamps high above their heads, peering from safe distances into Carter's room, as if they expected to meet a whole army of desperate thieves.

"I have been robbed," shrieked Carter—"bound down in my chair and robbed—an outrage has been perpetrated upon me!" But the condition of the room did not corroborate his story; not an article had been disturbed.

"Of what have you been robbed?" gasped one terror-stricken voice. It was not his money, for his porte-monnaie was safely in its accustomed place; nor his watch, for that was in his fob pocket; yet his disarranged garments gave evidence of some unusual proceeding. He discovered his loss at last, and with a yell, as he fruitlessly searched for the paper which he had received from Carroll, he bounded to the middle of the floor. "It is gone!" he screamed, "gone!"

"What is gone?" asked two or three of the mystified crowd.

"A paper—an important paper!" he gasped; and then he threw himself into a chair, burying his face in his hands, and groaning, while the puzzled lodgers, their tongues at last becoming loosed, burst into their own wild conjectures as to what had really happened, and they offered equally wild suggestions as to what had better be done. Some were for running for the police, others for making a general alarm in

the neighborhood, and others, shaking their heads, said it was too late to attempt a discovery of the thieves.

Carter had a horrible suspicion of the truth—he felt that Tighe a Vohr was the perpetrator of the theft; but what could he do in the matter now? he knew that no efforts of his could recover the paper, and did he bring a charge against Tighe he had no witnesses, no proof to sustain it.

The lodgers, finding that Carter seemed more disposed to commune with his own unhappy thoughts than to listen to their suggestions, gradually returned to their rooms, and Carter was left alone with his landlord.

"What will you do about this thing, Mr. Carter?" he asked.

"I'll do nothing about it till the morning," was the sullen reply; and the landlord, having relit Mr. Carter's lamp, withdrew, leaving his lodger a prey to ungovernable hate and fury.

CHAPTER XLVII.

CRUEL TREACHERY.

It was the third day of the trial, and interest and expectation were more rife and eager because current rumor had it that on this day it was certain the prisoner would be sentenced.

Father Meagher and Clare were in their accustomed places, as were also Rick and Nora; and Tighe a Vohr and Corny O'Toole were in the center of the throng that densely filled the court-room, both eagerly peering in every direction for Carter, but he was nowhere to be seen. In one of the foremost seats, yet sufficiently in the rear not to be seen by Clare O'Donoghue, sat Dennier. He could only see the back of Clare's form, with an occasional glimpse of her clear-cut profile, but there was evidently enough in the view to chain his gaze; his eyes never turned from her until the prisoner entered.

A quarter of a century seemed to have passed over the latter's youthful head, his form was so bowed, and the lines in his face were so deeply worn; even physical strength appeared to have deserted him for a brief interval after he had taken his place in the dock, for he tottered and caught the railing of the enclosure for support.

The mass of evidence already collected was increased by new testimony—the witnesses on both sides pressed and worried, or re-examined, and at length, just when it was supposed that the last evidence had been taken, and people were settling themselves back in their seats to listen with fresh zest to the summing up by the counsel, it was rumored through the court that a new witness on the part of the crown was to be called. Ears were strained to catch the name, and necks

stretched that the earliest glimpse might be caught of the person of the witness. Another instant, and the name rung through the court, falling like molten lead on more than one quivering heart—it was Mortimer Carter.

As if it were the result of some magician's power, the prisoner's bowed form straightened to its former erectness, his face, so ghastly a moment previous, flushed with all the crimson of his fiercest moods, and his eyes, which from physical weakness had worn that morning so dull a stare, now seemed to shine with supernatural brilliancy.

The corpulent form ascended to the witness-box, breathing so heavily that it seemed to pant, and the round, red face was so thickly covered with perspiration that it required a protracted use of the crimson-colored handkerchief. He seemed to avoid turning his eyes in the direction of the prisoner, and when by accident he caught a glimpse of that flushed and startled countenance, he instantly turned his eyes away. The witness required no pressing to tell his tale—clear, decisive, in almost true legal style, it fell from his lips—from the first moment of Carroll O'Donoghue's connection with the I. R. B. down to the expression of Carroll's treasonable sentiments which the witness had obtained from the accused in writing on the previous day, but which statement had been purloined from him on that same night by unknown parties—all was sworn to without a pause, or even a tremulous accent.

Not a shadow of hope remained for the horrified prisoner—that testimony was sufficient to convict him of the most felonious treason. People held their breaths, and even those who had been attracted to the trial from no motive of sympathy with the poor accused felt their hearts tighten a little as they listened to the damning proofs of a guilt which must insure the most stern conviction. Clare had thrown up her veil, and with compressed lips and hard breathing she had listened to the testimony, while Father Meagher's horror and indignation were plainly visible in the expression of his countenance. Even Dennier's face expressed contempt and

loathing, while Tighe a Vohr could hardly refrain from bursting aloud into his own peculiar expressions indicative of his feelings. Nora, removed from the support of those whose very tenderness would have been a stay in this terrible time, felt herself sicken when she heard the name and saw the person of the last witness; she was obliged to catch Rick's arm to save herself from falling, and she was forced to retain her clasp in order to prevent herself from sinking under the icy weight which seemed to press upon her. Carter stepped down from the witness-box, and with brazen effrontery took a seat almost on a line with the prisoner.

The jury retired, and within a half-hour returned with a verdict of guilty, without the slightest recommendation to mercy.

There was no scream from the sister of the prisoner, no undue excitement on the part of his nearest friends, as perhaps some of those in the court-room expected—there was only a longer drawing of breaths, and a rustling of garments as people changed their positions. On the part of Clare there was not a motion: she sat in the same inclined manner, her lips still compressed, her breathing still hard, and her eyes fixed in a wild, agonizing stare on the unhappy prisoner. The latter stood erect, his gaze fixed on Mortimer Carter; the verdict had not affected him, for he was absorbed in the horror of the traitor's act. The judge arose, and after the usual form, asked the prisoner if he had anything to say why sentence of death should not be pronounced upon him. Carroll drew a long, heavy breath, while his nostrils dilated, and his keen glance withdrew for an instant from Mortimer Carter, to fix itself upon those whom he was about to address; then, folding his arms, he began, his voice sounding at first as if it had been weakened by physical suffering.

"My lord, and gentlemen of the jury: You ask me if I have anything to say. In the face of the conviction which has just been returned, of what use, in your judgment, would be anything I could say? And yet, do not construe my re-

marks into a semblance of a wish to retract from the sentiments which have been sworn as mine—into any desire to have my sentence lighter than the court will adjudge. I am proud to stand here as the avowed friend of Ireland, and I am not afraid to denounce that system which makes as its base of operations in treason trials the information of perjured traitors. To yonder man"—his voice, increasing startlingly in tone, reached to the extreme ends of the crowded space, and his arm, outstretched, pointed in scathing denouncement of Morty Carter,—"I owe my present conviction: as my sworn bosom friend, he extorted my secrets under the guise of the tenderest affection, and he has revealed them here, to exemplify in his own person how fiendish can be the heart of a traitor. But he has only harmed my poor perishable body—my soul he cannot touch, and that, my lord, and gentlemen of the jury, is guilty of no crime to your government beyond love for a country which centuries of oppression has only left more endeared to the hearts of her inthralled sons. I have done!" His hands fell to his sides, his head dropped forward, and all the marks of premature age and suffering returned which had been so manifest on his entrance to the court-room.

The sentence was passed—it was the extreme penalty of the law, and the execution was announced to take place on a date which left little more than the interval of a month.

"Come home," whispered Nora to Rick; "quick; or I shall faint by the way!"

He half carried her out, being obliged to support her tottering steps, even on the street.

Father Meagher was obliged to shake Clare slightly in order to rouse her; she seemed to have sunk into some horrible lethargy, and Dennier, observing the anxious effort of the priest, could control himself no longer. He forced his way to them, and begged to be allowed to render some assistance. The clergyman gave him a grateful look, and Clare, awakened at last to all the horror of the recent moments, burst into wild sobbing.

The prisoner, in the act of being hurried to his cell, caught the sound, and turned his face for a moment in the direction; the next instant he had disappeared with his guard.

Dennier, under the influence of feelings bitter, and yet in a measure also sweet, from the fact that he could be of some service to her who had grown to be the constant object of his thoughts, flew to give an order for a carriage. He met Tighe, and giving him the commission, returned. A number of respectful sympathizers had gathered about the priest and his companion, and the latter, after the first burst of her wild grief, shrunk from the notice of which she was the interesting object. She pulled down her veil, stifled her sobs, and seizing Father Meagher's hand, whispered to him to go; but Dennier begged them to wait the arrival of the carriage which he had ventured to order.

Tighe speedily returned to say that the carriage waited, and the clergyman found an opportunity of speaking briefly to the faithful fellow about Nora, and of requesting him to try to discover her whereabouts.

As the three took their seats in the vehicle, Dennier said: "Permit me, reverend sir, to insist that you shall partake of my hospitality to-day." And the priest found it useless to attempt to decline the invitation. They were driven rapidly to the hotel, but Clare seemed to take no note of what passed; every thought was concentrated upon that dreadful sentence, and she answered Father Meagher's inquiries in a wild, vacant way that alarmed the clergyman, and caused an expression of intense concern to come into the face of Dennier. She tasted nothing of the repast that was ordered, and she listened like one in a dream while the priest and his young entertainer sadly discussed Carroll's unhappy case.

The young man, unfettered now by the trammels of a repulsive duty, could give unchecked expression to ideas and sentiments which stamped him as Irish in feeling as the most loyal of Ireland's devoted sons. The clergyman was more than ever charmed with the frank, ardent young fellow, and

he found himself giving involuntary vent to his anxiety about Nora. He told of the sacrifice which she had made of herself for her wretched father, and the cheek of the manly listener flushed with admiration of the noble girl.

"Allow me, also, reverend sir," he said, "to unite my efforts with those that may be made by the faithful Tighe to find the young lady."

Father Meagher bowed his grateful acceptance, saying, after a brief pause: "I am confident that Tighe will succeed, for he knows every haunt, and he is familiar with the person and character of this man who is called Rick of the Hills. I think he can hardly fail in his search."

Clare, at the mention of Nora's name, aroused for a moment from her melancholy lethargy, but the next instant she was as abstracted as before; nor did she again show any emotion until, when ready for departure, Dennier stood bidding her adieu.

"Miss O'Donoghue," he said, his deep voice penetrating for the first time that day with something of its olden power through the horror of her thoughts, "once you asked a favor which I could not grant without violating my duty,—now I proffer to you, unasked, a similar boon. All my influence with the governor of the jail shall be used in your brother's behalf; I think I can promise that you shall be admitted to him to-morrow, and after that very frequently; no effort on my part shall be spared to serve you and yours."

She was herself at last; she bent over the hand he extended, and her burning tears, bringing relief to her aching heart and whirling brain, gushed wildly forth. Ah! for that one moment, in which he felt that he was entirely forgiven, in which hope whispered that the future might win for him a return of his regard, young Dennier would have cheerfully taken his place in the dock beside Carroll O'Donoghue. Having promised to telegraph the time which the governor might appoint for their first visit to the poor condemned, the final adieu was taken, and Father Meagher and Clare were driven in the carriage, again provided by Dennier's careful forethought, to take the mail-car for Dhrommacohol.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

SACRIFICE BEARING FRUIT.

HURRIED steps had pursued Nora and Rick when they so hastily left the court-room that morning—steps which speedily overtook the pair, while at the same time a voice that was full of wonder and pain cried: "Nora!"

Both turned to behold Father O'Connor. The sight of him, connected as he was with all that was dearest to her, and dear himself, because of his own inestimable qualities and companionship when they were children together, opened the flood-gates of her already overcharged emotions—she wept with all the abandon of a broken heart. Passers-by were attracted, and most of them stood to watch the strange scene, made up of a weeping lady, a young priest, and beside them a queer, ill-dressed, awkward-looking man.

"Come home with us," gasped Nora, seizing the clergyman's arm; "we cannot speak here!"

He obeyed, walking beside her, while Rick, considerably abashed, walked behind them. The residents of the squalid quarter who chanced to be about gazed with reverential wonder at the young priest, as he accompanied the painfully-contrasted pair to their humble abode.

"Do you know—have you heard?" said Nora, looking in a wild way from one to the other of her companions, when the three were within the little sitting-room, and the door securely shut on all prying eyes.

Father O'Connor seemed to understand her. "Yes;" he answered; "I know what you mean. Father Meagher wrote to me the strange history of Rick here being your father, and how you had renounced us all. My duties prevented me

from going to Dhrommacohol, and they have been so pressing as to keep me from Carroll's trial until to-day. I only arrived in time to hear the verdict and the sentence."

"The sentence!" the crushing weight of all that was contained in those two dreadful words fell on the agonized heart of the wretched girl. Her brain whirled, and feeling that consciousness was about to forsake her, she stepped forward to save herself from falling; but it was a useless precaution, and, before either of her companions could interpose a hand to prevent, she had dropped insensible at their feet.

Scalding tears fell from Rick's eyes on the white, upturned face as he raised her, and with Father O'Connor's assistance, placed her upon a lounge.

"Has she no female friend whom you can summon?" asked the priest.

Rick thought of good-natured Mrs. Murphy, and mentioned her.

"Summon her," said the priest; "I shall watch until you return," and he began to apply such simple restoratives as were at hand. She recovered before Rick's return, and the sight of the young clergyman's pale face with its deep, soft brown eyes bent so pityingly upon her, brought back all the agony of the past few hours.

"Oh, father!" she said, striving to sit up, but failing in the effort from very weakness, and clasping her hands tightly over her eyes, as if to shut out some dreadful scene.

"My poor, poor child!"

It was all in the way of earthly comfort that he, though deeply affected, could say—her worldly future appeared so bleak and desolate. He resumed, after the silence of a moment:

"Father Meagher and Clare—why were they not with you in the court-room; or had you parted from them before I saw you?"

It was evident that he did not know how Nora had concealed herself from her friends. The good pastor of Dhrom-

macohol had not had time to communicate that fact in addition to the other news, and the young priest did not dream that Nora had not alone withdrawn from the protection of Father Meagher, but that she had also renounced all communication with the friends of her childhood. Now, however, he speedily won all the facts from her, and he stood a little appalled at the extent of the sacrifice she had deemed it her duty to make. He attempted to combat her resolution, pleading the affection of Clare, and her plighted troth to Carroll.

"No, father," she said, striving to speak calmly; "Carroll will need these last days for his God—it is better that I should be forgotten. I could not, being the child of such a man, go among them now—and then our poverty would rend their hearts; they would think that I was suffering greater privations than I am, and they would take from themselves to give to me. No; I have thought, and wept, and prayed over it all, and I feel that this sacrifice which I am making, bitter though it is, is best. Promise me, father, that you will not let them know you have seen me—should you"—as she saw the priest hesitate—"we shall fly, my father and I, to a surer retreat."

He tried to evade her by answering: "I shall not see them for a week or more, owing to duties which require my immediate return, and which will detain me at home for that period. Then I shall return here, in order to make an effort to see Carroll."

She perceived his subterfuge, and was quick to plead: "Promise me that you will not write to them of my whereabouts."

He deemed it better, because of her weakened condition, to gratify her. "Since you desire it so earnestly, I shall not write."

But he did not promise to be silent about her when he should visit Dhrommacohol, which he was now determined to do on the earliest opportunity, and she seemed to overlook

that probability in her eagerness to win from him the promise not to write.

Rick returned with good-natured Mrs. Murphy. Her motherly skill immediately devised means of comfort for Nora which were grateful and refreshing to the still weak girl. She reclined on the well-worn lounge, and looked at the kind-hearted matron bustling about in services for Rick, as well as for the invalid she had come to tend, with, as Mrs. Murphy expressed it, "the smile of an angel." Father O'Connor was obliged to depart, and having taken adieu of Nora, he turned to Rick.

"Good-by," he said, holding the coarse palm of the latter warmly in his clasp, "good-by, Rick, and may Almighty God reward Nora's devotion by making you what you yourself would be in the sight of Heaven."

Rick started—had the eyes bent so earnestly upon him the power of reading his soul? did the priestly attributes of the speaker enable him to penetrate the secrets of his wretched heart? It would almost seem so from the deep import of the words; and under the influence of such feelings, Rick could not answer—he wrung the clergyman's hand hard and turned away.

Mrs. Murphy was also obliged to leave to attend to her own household, but she promised to return in the morning, and the painfully contrasted pair were left alone together.

"Nora," said Rick, when a long interval had passed in gloomy silence, "would you be content to remain with Mrs. Murphy for a few days while I go away on a little business?"

She endeavored to assume a sitting posture, but weakness made her sink again on her pillow. "Perhaps you want to leave me," she said, faintly, "perhaps you are troubled at my condition, and would take this means of restoring me to Father Meagher; but do not, I beg of you—do not now deprive me of what I have prayed and hoped for so long!"

"And what is that?" he asked.

"To see you once more before God's altar, a true penitent"

—her cheeks flushed with the ardor of her feelings,—"to know that you knelt again in that tribunal where God himself would give you pardon and peace!"

He rose from his chair and approached her. "Nora," he said, standing where she could not see his face, "this intended journey of mine will be for the purpose of making a restitution—and if I would, I could not take you with me, because of your feeble state. It is due to your influence that I have at last made up my mind to perform this act of justice; perhaps, if I delay, my weak soul may fly from the task."

"Then go, father; I shall not bid you stay—but where and when is this journey to take place?"

"To-morrow, when I have seen Mrs. Murphy, and made arrangements with her concerning you; I have little doubt that she will give you a home with her until I return; but where my journey is to be I cannot tell you—it is one of my guilty secrets."

She said no more.

Mrs. Murphy came in the morning and gladly consented to Rick's proposition; later in the day, when Nora's strength was sufficiently regained to enable her to walk, leaning on the good-natured woman's arm, the three set out for Mrs. Murphy's abode, and there, having reluctantly allowed himself to be persuaded to remain for one of the good woman's substantial meals, Rick bade Nora adieu and left her.

CHAPTER XLIX.

PEACE TO A STORM-TOSSED SOUL.

FATHER O'CONNOR, after his hurried visit to Tralee, arrived at home, much to the satisfaction of his old housekeeper, and to the extravagant delight of stuttering Jerry. There was also another in the little household to welcome him—a beautiful boy of some twelve summers ; but his beauty bore the traces of recent illness, and his dark eyes had the brilliancy which gives evidence of early decay. He had been sitting on the lowest step of the little porch, so that he might be ready to spring forward at the first glimpse of the returning clergyman, and with many an anxious question to both the old housekeeper and Jerry he had long maintained his watch. He had been rewarded at last ; the tall, clerical form appeared, turning into the *boreen*, and the anxious boy, forgetting that his limbs were still enfeebled by recent illness, bounded forward, his cheeks flushed, his eyes sparkling, and every feature of his exquisitely beautiful face expressing gratitude and affection.

"Bartley, my boy, how are you ?" asked the priest, grasping with the tenderness of a father the lad's outstretched hands.

"So much better, your reverence, that I think I'll be strong enough for my journey to-morrow."

Father O'Connor shook his head. "No, Bartley ; you must not think of that yet—these cheeks must grow more plump,"—and he playfully patted the boy's face.

"I'm pining for Cathleen !" The flush suddenly faded from the fair countenance, and the dark eyes glistened with tears.

"But Cathleen knows why you remain from her," answered the priest; "have I not twice written to her about you—how you were hurt in Tralee by the overturning of a vehicle, how strangers kindly cared for you, and how you persevered in journeying to me only to become ill as soon as you found me? She knows these particulars, and she knows, also, that I will send you back to her as soon as you have sufficiently recovered—are you tired of me, Bartley, that you want to leave me so soon?"

"Tired of you, your reverence!" the boy's two hands closed with an affectionate pressure upon the priest's hand, and his eyes met those of the clergyman with an eloquent expression of gratitude, while he continued: "I place you in my heart with Cathleen."

No more was said, and the boy walked confidingly by the side of his benefactor to the little dwelling, where the self-sacrificing priest found that, comparatively short as had been his absence, there had been numerous calls for him. So perfect, however, was his discipline of himself that, though tortured by distressing thoughts of the doomed Carroll and the unhappy Nora and Clare, each the fond playmate of his youth, no trace of his inward agitation was suffered to appear—his exterior had all that calmness which is ever the sign of a truly mortified will.

The next day was the vigil of the Assumption, and in the afternoon many waited in the little chapel to be admitted to shrift. Hour after hour the poor, patient priest sat, hearing the doleful story of sin and voluntary imperfection, and reproving, admonishing, exhorting and counseling. He never seemed to weary; even when the tale was but the outpouring of a morbid self-love, craving for the sympathy which should minister to its vanity.

The last penitent had disappeared within the confessional, and the whispered sound of voices from the curtained recess could be heard throughout the little chapel, when an ill-dressed man with shambling gait entered, and knelt for an in-

stant near the door. Then rising, he looked about him with a wild stare. There was no one within sight, and guided by that sound of whispering voices, he walked slowly to the confessional. Kneeling almost in front of the sacred tribunal, he bowed his head and beat his breast, while burning tears gushed from his eyes. The penitent came forth, and Father O'Connor, observing the kneeling form, waited. It rose, walked a few steps forward, then, as if deterred by some sudden fear, paused, and knelt again to bow its head and beat its breast. Still the priest waited.

At length, with a motion so sudden and hurried that he seemed to be impelled by an unseen power, Rick of the Hills arose and darted within the penitent's side of the confessional.

What was there in the tale he so gaspingly told to make the priest start and tremble—to make him lift the curtain which screened him from view, and lean forward as if he was stifling for air?

"You do not speak, father," gasped the penitent, when the last of that thrilling confession was told—"is there no pardon for me?"

The priest turned to him, his breath scarcely more regular than the quick and fevered breathings of the wretched man beside him: "Are you willing to make all the atonement that is in your power—will you reveal those secrets to the world, so that justice may be done?"

"I will, father: I will make a public confession of all; I ask for no earthly mercy for myself—I seek nothing but the pardon of my offended God." His sobs burst forth.

"Then make your act of contrition; speak the words from your heart, and God, whom you have so outraged, will Himself give the absolution my unworthy lips shall utter."

He raised his hand and pronounced the words by which the fetters of that miserable soul were unloosed, and Rick rose up a freer and happier man than he had been for twenty-seven years. A strange peace had descended into his soul, and he tottered to the altar, there to make, by his happy tears

and broken contrite prayers, such a thanksgiving as would have made Nora, could she have witnessed it, feel amply paid for all her self-immolation.

The priest also left the confessional. His face was deathly pale, and his inward agitation was somewhat visible in the unsteadiness of his step. He too sought the altar, first pausing to whisper to Rick: "Come into the house when you have finished—I have something to say to you."

The kneeling man nodded an assent, and the clergyman passed on to the sanctuary. He heard Rick leave the chapel, and then he prostrated himself before the altar. "My God! my God!" he murmured, "why hast Thou reserved this revelation until now? but Thy will be done, and pardon those who have been the cause of so much suffering."

Long he knelt there, praying, and struggling with the horde of unhappy feelings called up by that mysterious confession. But at length he regained his wonted calm, and with a steadier gait than that with which he had walked to the altar, he left the chapel to return to the house.

Rick was waiting in the little parlor; if he had feared to meet the priest because of his recent wretched tale, the first glance of the clergyman's soft, pitying eyes, the first touch of the friendly hand so cordially extended to him, at once restored his confidence.

"Father," he said, looking steadily into the face of the priest, though his voice trembled, "will *you* take the responsibility of the matter which I have confided to you? will you let me tell you everything fully, here, and will *you* give it forth to the world? it will come with better favor from you than from me."

Father O'Connor did not reply for a moment; his eyes sought the floor, and his lips moved as if in prayer; at last he looked up. "Yes, Rick, since you so desire; and now tell the story as clearly as you can."

He tightly closed the little parlor door, took from the pocket of his sontane a small tablet and pencil, and as Rick

proceeded with his tale, marked down sufficient to enable him to repeat the account. On its conclusion Rick sat with flushed face and folded arms.

The priest arose: "Rick," he said, and his voice had a startling clearness, "thank God from your heart for this night's work! He has already pardoned you, and He would even now give you an earthly reward for your act of justice, late though you have performed that act. Cathleen—your Cathleen—is within your reach!"

"Great God! what do you mean?" The poor startled creature was up from his seat, his wild eyes turned appealingly on the clergyman's face, and he was gasping for breath.

The priest said softly: "You shall know in a moment;" and then he left the room, returning shortly, and leading by the hand the beautiful boy whom he had called Bartley. "Tell," he said to the wondering lad, "all that you know about Cathleen Kelly,—this person here thinks he too knows her, and he would like to hear you speak of her."

An exquisite smile broke over the boy's face; he needed no pressing to accede to the request, for instantly and artlessly he poured forth all that his own ardent affection for Cathleen prompted—her sisterly kindness to himself—to her was owing his own unusual intelligence,—her charity to others, her constant gentleness; all was told with a candor and earnestness which must have carried conviction to the most unbelieving mind. Rick could not restrain his emotion; he held his clasped hands before his face, but the tears trickled through his fingers.

"Perhaps, after all," he said brokenly, "it is not she—not *my* Cathleen."

"It is, Rick,"—the priest's hand was upon Rick's shoulder—"I have other reasons than Bartley's story for knowing that the Cathleen he speaks of is your Cathleen; and you shall be speedily convinced, for in company with this lad you shall go to her,—now that he will have some one with him, I think perhaps he will be strong enough to make the journey."

"I will, father; indeed I will!" said the boy joyfully.

"But even though I should recognize her," resumed Rick, mournfully, "she will not know me, and she may refuse to acknowledge me."

"I think not," answered the priest; "Providence, who has dealt so mercifully with you, will not now imbitter your cup of happiness just as it is at your lips. Besides, you will carry to her a letter from me, and you can get the record of her baptism."

Wild hope once more flooded the heart of the excited man; in his joy he dropped on his knees at the feet of Father O'Connor. "Father, have *you* forgiven me?"

For an instant the priest's eyes were turned upward; then they fell with their wonted kindly look on the kneeling suppliant, as he answered: "When God forgives, of what have I, the *creature*, to complain?"

Rick bent over the hand he grasped, and bedewed it with his tears. "Nora," he said, when his emotion calmed sufficiently to let him speak,—"how shall I quiet her anxiety?"

"I shall attend to that," answered Father O'Connor; "give yourself no concern, Rick, save to thank God for His wonderful goodness to you. To-morrow I think you and Bartley can begin the journey."

For the first time in twenty-seven years, Rick knelt that night before he went to sleep, and the next morning, for the first time in twenty-seven years, he attended the holy sacrifice of the mass. Three hours after, having been provided with a bountiful breakfast, and comfortably equipped by the thoughtful kindness of Father O'Connor, he, accompanied by the delighted Bartley, began his journey to Cathleen.

CHAPTER L.

A HAPPY MEETING.

UNHAPPY Nora! it required all her heroism to endure without repining the hard lot she had imposed upon herself. Never to see Carroll again—to have him die without hearing from him one last word, without catching one farewell look! her heart swelled, and its icy weight grew heavier. She sought to busy herself with her own light labor, in the hope of winning at least temporary forgetfulness of her sorrows; but the needle fell unheeded from her hand, and she dropped unconsciously into the most melancholy reveries. Sympathetic Mrs. Murphy endeavored in her kindly way to cheer the unhappy young creature, whose mysterious grief—for she knew nothing of Nora's antecedents—won her deepest pity; but she soon learned to feel that the greatest kindness she could show the young lady would be to leave her to her own reflections. So Nora divided the day between visits to a neighboring chapel, fruitless attempts to work, and in the evenings, choosing that time because she thought she would be less remarked, a stealthy walk to the jail. On one of these occasions she was seen by Tighe a Vohr, who had spared neither time nor labor in the search he had been requested to make; thus far he had been unsuccessful, owing to his efforts having been made in places not so respectable as Mrs. Murphy's abode. His first impulse, when he was sure of the identity of the veiled girl, was to rush to her and give vent to his delight by an extravagant greeting; but something prompted him to restrain himself, and he caught Shaun, lest the dog, having no reason for restraint in his case, might be less discreet. At a safe distance, and with a command

which kept Shaun quietly by his side, he followed Nora; he noted the house which she entered, and then he hastened to the "Blennerhasset Arms" to report to Captain Dennier, between whom and himself a series of communications existed regarding the efforts which both had been quietly making for the discovery of the missing girl.

Nora, unsuspecting, and absorbed in her unhappy thoughts, little dreamed of the surprise which was on the next day to greet her. She had just returned from her stealthy walk to the jail, and was vainly endeavoring to busy herself with her work, when the knocker affixed to Mrs. Murphy's hall door loudly sounded. It put the good lady herself in somewhat of a flutter, but it did not affect Nora—she was so sure that it bore no reference to her. There was the bustle of more than one person entering, the sound of more than one pair of feet upon the stair, and before she could even rise from her seat, Clare O'Donoghue, conducted by delighted Mrs. Murphy, who recognized her visitors as those who had twice before called to learn of Nora's whereabouts, had rushed across the room, and was wildly embracing her.

"Nora, darling, at last! how could you be so cruel? but we have found you now, and we shall never, never let you go again!"

Her happy tears would let her say no more; and even Father Meagher, who had followed Clare, and was now standing with outstretched hands waiting his turn to welcome and be welcomed, showed traces of emotion. Mrs. Murphy was weeping copious tears of sympathy.

For Nora,—her tired, sick heart could no longer resist an affection which was so delightful; she yielded herself at last to all its refreshing tenderness, and she sobbed in Clare's arms.

Mutual explanations at length followed, and while the visitors discovered the depth of that sacrifice which would have completed itself at the risk of an utterly broken heart, Nora had to learn that her discovery was due to the faithful Tighe a Vohr, and not, as she had supposed, to Father O'Connor. She

had also to learn of Captain Dennier's noble kindness, and more than all, to hear that she was to accompany the party that evening to see Carroll. That information was sufficient to send the blood in a mad glow to her face, and to cause her to tremble so that Clare, beside whom she sat, felt the tremor; she threw her arms more warmly about Nora, and whispered:

"You are Carroll's affianced, remember; nothing can undo that bond—nothing!"

The words with which Nora would have repeated her resolution not to disturb Carroll's last days died upon her lips; she had not the strength to complete her self-imposed sacrifice now, and she silently yielded. But it was in vain that they attempted to control her resolution of remaining with Mrs. Murphy to await Rick's return—in vain they used every entreaty to persuade her to return to Dhrommacohol at least for the time of his absence: her determination was firm with regard to the place of her present abode; and then Clare, with equal firmness, declared her intention of remaining with Nora, appealing to Mrs. Murphy for accommodation; and the latter lady gave delighted assurance of her willingness and ability to grant the request.

Mr. Dennier's influence, vigorously exerted as it was, was powerless to win all he craved for his friends. The governor of the prison was under too strict a charge to be able to throw open Carroll's cell as often as the young ex-officer hoped—and this visit, and perhaps one more before the final parting, was all that could be anticipated. Thus it was with the saddest emotions that the little party of three left Mrs. Murphy's for the jail.

It needed no words from the unhappy prisoner to convince Nora of the unchangeableness of his affection; the fond, devoted, yet agonizing look that he turned upon her, the thrilling touch of his wasted hand, spoke more eloquently than a thousand utterances, and she nestled by his side, happy and rested for the moment in being so near him, and yet broken-hearted at the thought of that fate which was so soon

to snatch him from her. For the first few moments but little was said—the dreadful shadow of that approaching doom overhung them all, and restrained for a time even the words that Father Meagher would speak; but at last the interchange of final thoughts and sentiments began, and Carroll, anticipating the clergyman, himself reverted to the traitor, Morty Carter.

"I attempted to tell you of his perfidy," said the priest, "that you might be on your guard; but you would not listen!"

"I remember," said Carroll, putting his hand wildly to his forehead; "I remember," he repeated, his voice showing how much that painful memory cost him, "and oh, I understand it all!"

"Tell me, my boy,"—the priest stood up, putting his hand affectionately on Carroll's shoulder,—"what are your feelings for this poor wretch—can you forgive him?"

The prisoner's hand sought the crucifix within his bosom. "With this, father, before my eyes"—holding up the image which he drew forth,—"and remembering that a greater than I was betrayed before me, I have learned to forgive him."

"Thank God!" the kind old clergyman's eyes were moist with the earnestness of his thanksgiving, and Nora too looked up with humid, grateful glance.

The time allotted for the visit was short, and hardly had the full tide of loving confidence begun when the turnkey was at the door signaling for the visitors to come forth. They tore themselves from the prisoner, turning again and again from the threshold to look fond, mournful adieus; but the door of the cell at last shut them out, and the poor captive was left to resume that intercourse with Heaven which alone made him resigned to his fate, and strong to suffer.

CHAPTER LI.

FATHER O'CONNOR'S TALE.

In one of the courtly apartments of Dublin Castle, with sundry papers and dispatches spread on an open cabinet before him, sat Lord Heathcote. His face wore an anxious, disturbed look, and his hands nervously turned over the documents. One, a recently dated letter, came to his grasp, and though he had evidently perused it before, he scanned it again with more than ordinary interest, reading aloud the following portion:

"Captain Dennier is still in Tralee; he has been more than once in company with a Catholic clergyman and a young lady who is reported to be the ward of the latter, and the sister of the Fenian prisoner, Carroll O'Donoghue. He was also present in the court during the trial of the Fenian prisoner, Carroll O'Donoghue. What his business in Tralee is I have been unable to discover."

The nobleman put down the missive without reading farther, and threw himself back in his chair as if he would yield to some painfully absorbing reflection. There was a signal for ingress at the door, and to his response a servant entered with a note. The nobleman hastily tore it open:

"To His Honor, Lord Heathcote:

Will your lordship kindly consent to see a Catholic clergyman on business of vital importance—the unfolding of a tale which dates back more than a quarter of a century, and which will disclose at this late date the perfidy that has separated two faithful hearts and sent one broken to the grave?

I have the honor to remain

Your lordship's obedient servant,

Rev. Charles O'Connor.

Again and again Lord Heathcote read the brief missive, his

face darkening, and his manner growing strangely excited.

"I will see the gentleman," he said, at length, to the attendant in waiting. "Conduct him here."

The servant withdrew, and in a few minutes Father O'Connor stood in his lordship's presence. With no diminution of his wonted ease and grace of manner, the priest courteously, but calmly, saluted the nobleman; and save for an unwonted color in his cheeks, and a strange sparkle in his eyes, one would little have dreamed that he was inwardly the prey of violent emotions. Lord Heathcote had simply inclined his head, not deigning even to motion his visitor to a chair; but the latter's own ineffable grace, and the sweetness of a countenance which combined the charm of physical and spiritual beauty, gained insensibly upon the nobleman; he found himself, somewhat to his own surprise, requesting the clergyman to be seated.

"Pardon me, my lord," answered the priest, "if I ask to be permitted to stand. I am only here for the purpose of unfolding to you this tale; I have nought to do with the result —that will remain with your lordship."

"This tale?" repeated Lord Heathcote, straightening himself in his chair, and speaking coldly, that he might hide his agitation; "why do you ask to unfold it to me?"

"Because it directly concerns your lordship—because you alone have the power of meting out justice to the injured parties!"

"Speak on!" commanded the nobleman, shading his face with his hand.

"Have I your lordship's permission to tell the tale in my own way—to go back to the beginning, and give you the dates and the facts as I received them?"

"You have—go on."

The flush in the priest's face deepened. "Twenty-seven years ago," he began, his voice for the first time slightly trembling, "there lived in one of the northern counties of Ireland an aged t impoverished, Catholic

gentleman named Dougherty. Only one member of his family remained to him—a daughter. This girl, Marie, who had not yet reached her seventeenth year, was famed throughout the little district in which they lived for her devotion to her father, her kindness to the poor, and her extraordinary beauty. Educated by her accomplished father, her culture rivaled that of more richly nurtured ladies, and her kind and simple manner won for her universal affection. Near them lived a young man named Mortimer Carter; he had scarcely attained his twentieth year, but natural sharpness and an education which had been the boon of a wealthy, deceased uncle, had fitted him for schemes demanding rare skill of brain and strength of nerve. The last of a family which early decay brought at youthful ages to the grave, he was the trusted and cherished inmate of an abode that comprised a newly-wedded couple as youthful as himself. The husband, Richard Sullivan, lived but for his wife, and devoted every energy to making for her a comfortable livelihood. Springing from an honest, well-to-do stock, he also had received a fair education, and sought opportunities of adding to the latter by receiving instruction during the long winter evenings from their young boarder and friend, Mortimer Carter. Carter, from the first opportunity that enabled him to render some important service to Mr. Dougherty, and which gained for him frequent access to the house, was struck with admiration and love of the beautiful daughter. He concealed the fact, however, probably because he feared that a disclosure of it would exclude him from the family, and he feigned to be only the ardent and disinterested friend. In time, and before Marie had reached her eighteenth year, there visited that part of Ireland a young gentleman, the sole scion of a wealthy and ancient English house. A title would descend to him on his father's death, but until then the young man, who was simple in his tastes and preferred quiet and obscurity to the ostentation of wealth, chose rather to be known by his own plain name of Berkeley. Accident brought Marie Dougherty to his notice, and dis-

closed sufficient of her cultivated mind to win the young stranger's heart. He found his way to the cottage, and by his address obtained the favor of the old gentleman; a few weeks more, and his love was reciprocated entirely with the father's sanction, though Marie refused to marry, because young Berkeley was not of her faith. He promised her untrameled freedom in her practice of her religion, unrestrained liberty in the Catholic education of their offspring, should Heaven grant them such; but still the pious girl hesitated, and so great and so entirely trusted a friend was Mortimer Carter, that it was into his ears she poured her doubts and fears. Her fond old father, fearing from the growing feebleness of his health his own speedy demise, and confident from all that he had observed of their young visitor, and from numerous letters which the latter had shown, that his daughter's future would be well assured, would have persuaded her into the alliance; but she, though loving with all the strength of her nature, still hesitated because he was not of her faith, until the blow fell which her father had feared. He was stricken with a fatal illness, and yielding at last to his wish, she was married by his dying bed. A Catholic priest performed the ceremony which united Marie Dougherty to Walter Berkeley, and Mortimer Carter and Richard Sullivan were the witnesses. Immediately afterward, however, a college mate of young Berkeley's who had taken orders in the Episcopal Church, and who happened to be visiting in the vicinity, performed the ceremony anew, that no invalidity might ever be brought against it."

Father O'Connor paused, as if he expected some remark from his listener, but the latter was as motionless as though he had been turned to stone—not a tremor being visible even in the hand which shaded his face. The priest resumed:

"Young Berkeley was not in possession of much fortune; his father was a hard man, and ill disposed to gratify youthful extravagance; still less would he, with his strong English and Protestant prejudices, brook the thought of his heir marrying an Irish Catholic. So the young man deemed it best

to write nothing of his alliance in his letters home; he had sufficient means to live in comfort, and the novelty of his simple home, with the constant charm of a beautiful wife whom he devotedly loved, amply compensated for the loss of titled grandeur.

"Mortimer Carter was now the trusted friend of both wife and husband; the latter, induced by the kindly representations of Marie, and influenced by her example, learned to make an entire confidant of him.

"Thus they lived for a year, when Marie gave birth to twin boys; they were christened, by the clergyman who had performed the first marriage ceremony, Walter and William. At the same time a little girl was born to Richard Sullivan, but at the expense of its mother's life, and the babe was left to the care of its heart-broken father. A kind neighbor volunteered to assist him in its care, and Sullivan soon learned to concentrate in his child the love which he fancied had been buried in the coffin of his wife.

"One night, just as he had parted from the caress of his little one, now old enough to evince her delight at his presence, he met on a lonely road a bailiff with whom in bygone days Sullivan's father had some unpleasant transaction. Contrary to wonted circumstances, old Mr. Sullivan had triumphed, and the bailiff was made thereby more angry and revengeful. He never lost an opportunity of taunting any member of the family, and on this occasion he poured forth a torrent of abuse on young Sullivan, and spoke insultingly of the latter's father, long reposing in his grave. The young man was goaded beyond endurance—in the heat of sudden passion he struck his aggressor a most unfortunate blow; the man, after three heavy groans, expired.

"While the murderer, realizing what he had done, stood horror-stricken above the corpse, unable either to leave it, or to take precautions of secrecy, accident led Mortimer Carter to the very spot. With his usual quickness he immediately thought of a plan by which the guilt could be transferred

The ribbon men were about, their aggressions frequent, and as the murdered bailiff was known to be disliked because of his hard measures, it would excite little wonder or doubt, could it be made to appear that he was another victim of the mysterious band. Carter was familiar with their signs, and it required but little time to affix to the corpse the paper which should tell of another crime by the nightly marauders. They hurried from the spot, the deadly secret buried in both breasts.

"Carter's ruse succeeded; there was not a suspicion that the bailiff was murdered in any other manner; but Sullivan was haunted by a horrible remorse; safe though he was, his fears gave him little peace, and the love for his child alone restrained him from some desperate act.

"Letters from England requesting young Berkeley's return had become frequent; letters which contained ardent expressions of the old lord's desire for his son to contract a befitting alliance, and there was mentioned the name of the lady so designed. But Berkeley gave little heed, returning evasive replies—now citing his health as demanding a longer stay, now expressing a desire to prosecute at further length some researches. And thus matters continued for a little more than another year, when a third child was born—a girl; it was christened Marie. Then, when the young mother was still too weak to clasp her baby, a letter came demanding young Berkeley's instant presence in England—his father was dying. The young man, seized with remorse for his long absence, hurried his departure, leaving to the care of the still trusted and cherished friend, Mortimer Carter, his little household. He tore himself from his babes and his wife, telling the latter not to fatigue herself in her weak state by writing to him—that Mortimer would do all. And thus he departed."

Again Father O'Connor paused, but there was still no motion from the statue-like form in the easy-chair; and there was no remark, further than a brief request to proceed. The clergyman drew forth his little pocket tablets, and holding them in a convenient manner for frequent consultation, resumed:

"Now was the time for Carter's work; he had never ceased to love Marie Dougherty, wife though she had become, and jealousy of the youthful husband, combined with his own unrequited passion, made him skillful to plot, and strong to execute. Mrs. Berkeley, instead of recovering, seemed to grow daily weaker; indeed, she was in no condition to answer her husband's affectionate letters, which came with every mail, and upon Mortimer devolved entirely the task of amanuensis. She would not suffer him, however, to state truly her feeble condition; she insisted rather that he would ascribe it to her perfect obedience to her husband's request regarding her fatigue. So Mortimer, by the young wife's own feebly accorded permission, had ample opportunity to read each English letter when it came, and from them he learned that the illness of the old lord, fatal as it was certain to be, might still protract itself to the duration of months, and that young Berkeley, owing to the slight tenure upon which his father's life was held, could not tell him of his marriage—that he was even, for the sake of that frail life, compelled in a measure to feign assent to a future alliance with the lady whose name, from past letters, was familiar to Marie. But all gave the devoted wife little concern—she loved her husband so truly, she confided in him so surely, that nothing short of his own sworn statement would convince her that she had anything to fear. Carter studied to imitate Berkeley's handwriting; he succeeded admirably, and then, intercepting the next English letter which came, he opened it, and substituted for its contents a letter which he had penned in his forged hand.

"That letter told the young wife that her husband, yielding at last to his father's persuasions, was about to marry the lady with whose name Marie was familiar. It deplored the cruel necessity, it assured her of his undiminished affection, but it repeated in unmistakable terms the terrible fact. Marie, with sudden supernatural strength, arose from her couch a determined and desperate woman; she would go immediately to England, she would force her way to the dying lord, she

would herself proclaim her marriage—not for her own sake, but for that of her children. The very strength of her grief favored Carter's designs; he approved of her resolution, he sought to facilitate it when she announced her determination to take her baby with her, by proposing to find a trusty man to take care of the little party, which would consist of the mother, and infant, and a nurse for the latter, while he would remain to guard the twin brothers, now sturdy little fellows of eighteen months. She assented, and Carter sought Richard Sullivan. To him he made it appear a necessary and noble act to accompany the young wife to England, but not, however, to lead her as she desired to the home of her husband; instead, she was to be conducted to a different part, and there kept in seclusion till Carter could join her. Carter insisted that such a course was absolutely necessary, in order that she might retain her children, and preserve to them their faith—otherwise their treacherous father would tear them from her; and Sullivan's warmest sympathies were enlisted, and full only of a wild anxiety to save this broken-hearted woman another blow, he finally consented. Unsuspecting Marie gratefully agreed to travel with Richard, whom she well knew, and Carter, having promised to take Richard's place for the time to the latter's little one, supplied him with ample means.

"But the night before the journey, as Marie stood tremblingly looking at her marriage certificates preparatory to putting them safely away—for they were to accompany her—the reaction of her strained feelings, her sudden unnatural strength, her wild fears set in, and she fell fainting to the floor. When she recovered it was with her reason gone—her bright, cultivated mind had flown forever. Carter, prepared for any emergency, kept the fact of her harmless insanity a secret even from the few servants in the little household, bringing for immediate attendance upon her a foolish girl of the neighborhood; but, innocent though the latter was termed by the neighbors, she had sufficient sense to wait upon her mistress, and idiocy enough not to understand what might be going on about her.

"The journey was delayed, and Carter wrote to Berkeley one of the letters which the latter was wont to receive from his wife Then, while waiting for Marie to gain strength sufficient to leave her couch, he feigned to have frequent need of Sullivan at the house, forming pretenses which should take the latter, who was not ill-looking, nor of bad address at that time, to Marie's room at questionable hours, and taking care that some of the gossiping servants should know of the fact. He further pretended to the domestics to be astounded at, and suspicious of, the favor with which young Sullivan seemed to be received by the lady of the house, hinting that an attachment had existed between them previous to her more advantageous marriage; but of all this young Sullivan, anxious alone to be of service to the young creature whom he sincerely pitied, was ignorant. He fell blindly into the trap which was prepared for him. Marie had recovered strength to walk, but she still remained without sufficient mind to recognize any one but her baby; and Carter came to Sullivan with a marriage certificate in which the name of Walter Berkeley had been skillfully erased, and Richard Sullivan inserted in its place. He pretended to have received news of the immediate return of Berkeley, and he affrightedly said that the very condition of the poor wife would but further the husband's design of casting her off, and taking her children—that as a foil to this, and as there might be danger of meeting him if he now made a journey to England, he had thought of another plan. That Richard should pass to strangers as her husband—she was in no condition to contradict the statement; and for that purpose, lest any one perhaps, surprised at the eminent superiority of the beautiful wife, should question the assertion, he had changed the marriage certificate which certified to her marriage by a Catholic clergyman. Sullivan could travel with her and her baby, from whom she refused to be separated for an instant, to the southern part of Ireland, and there wait for Carter to join them with the twin boys; he also promised to bring with him Sullivan's little

daughter. Again poor Sullivan, though at first shrinking and hesitating, was induced to consent, and from no motive but that of saving Marie and her children.

"Shrouding their departure with all the secrecy he could throw about it, Carter saw them go: the poor young wife—having been induced to allow her baby to be carried by the foolish girl who had been her last attendant—clinging to Sullivan's arm and laughing as gleefully as a child. Then Carter turned to the execution of the remainder of his plot. He stole immediately from the little household one of the twin brothers, the baby William, and traveled with it to friends whom he expected to find in the extreme northern part of Ireland. He found, however, that his friends had emigrated to America nearly a year and a half before, taking with them their sole child, at that time a boy of six months. That information made him determine on another plan. The babe of six months who had been taken to America, and whose name was Charles O'Connor, would be now about the same age as the little William Berkeley, the companion of Carter's journey. Going to the parish clerk, he obtained a copy of the baptismal certificate of little Charles O'Connor on the pretense of being commissioned to do so by the child's parents; and then, hastening to a remote convent, he induced the good religious to assume temporary charge of his little companion, to whom he gave the same name as that on the baptismal certificate. Then he returned, and he pretended to be amazed and horrified by the discovery of the elopement of Berkeley's young wife with Richard Sullivan. Already he had paved the way for belief in the horrible tale by the few servants of the house, and they had not been slow to propagate hints of the scandal abroad. The whole district, comprising even those to whom her charity had been most largely dispensed, and by whom the purity of her character should have been undoubted, seemed to be convinced of her guilt, and expressions of horror came from every mouth. It was reported that she had taken two of the children with her—many

asked why she had left the third. Carter insinuated that it was because he bore his father's name, Walter.

"Giving sufficient time for Richard to have advanced far on his journey, Carter wrote to the young husband an account of the terrible circumstance; then, pending the answer, which he felt would be young Berkeley in person, he repaired to the woman who had charge of Sullivan's little daughter; deploring the guilt which now attached to her father, and expressing his assurance of the fact that the little girl was entirely deserted, he announced his intention of caring for the child. Amply compensating the woman, and without telling his destination, he departed with the little one.

"Young Berkeley came, as Carter had anticipated—came with all the incredulousness of a devoted and entirely trusting affection. He found the proofs of the horrid tale in his deserted household, in Carter's apparently distracted demeanor, in the account given by the servants, in the excited gossip of the place. Horrified, sickened, he seemed after the first dreadful shock to shut himself within a stern pride and reserve. What his feelings were no one knew. When Carter would propose pursuit of the fugitive, and at least recapture of the children, the young husband answered sternly:

"'She has stained my name; let her infamy shroud her and hers!'

"He paid and dismissed the servants, bade Carter a short farewell, and engaging a nurse for his remaining child, departed with it to England.

"In the interval Sullivan, passing as the husband of Marie, and the father of her beautiful babe, journeyed to the place designated by Carter; but in a village near Tralee the poor young mother became unable to proceed. They were in an inn, and Richard, in deep distress, knew not what to do; the kind landlady called the attention of the Catholic pastor to the case, and he in turn, strangely interested, brought it to the notice of one of his wealthy and estimable parishioners, Mrs. O'Donoghue. She immediately removed the little family to

her own spacious home, and there cared for the sick lady with all the tenderness of a mother. Sullivan was interrogated upon his past history; he shrunk from maintaining the false pretenses he had been induced to assume, and he felt that he had met with true friends, who would aid in rescuing his unhappy charge; but he feared to change his line of conduct without Carter's sanction, and as there was not time to communicate with the latter before satisfying his questioner, he determined for the present to adhere to his falsehood, and after, when he should have acquainted Carter with the whole, he would retract his statement, giving reasons for the same which must prove a sufficient excuse. So he told an apparently straightforward story—a truthful one so far as Marie's early life was concerned, adding that in her unprotected state her dying father had consented to her union with a man who was her inferior in everything save honesty. Illness after the birth of her child had unsettled her reason, and they were on their way to friends who would care properly for her. Sullivan also produced the marriage certificate, and thus convinced Mrs. O'Donoghue and Father Meagher of the truth of his tale. But Richard had no opportunity of retracting his story; his account to Carter brought back immediate directions to maintain the part he had undertaken, that he, Carter, would explain why when he joined him, as he speedily intended to do. All the tender care availed naught; Marie died, clasping her baby, but giving no other sign of returning reason; and Mrs. O'Donoghue, charmed with, and strangely attracted to, the beautiful infant, proposed to Sullivan that she should adopt it. Poor, unhappy Sullivan, too glad to be rid of a charge which galled him to care whether this proceeding on his part would please Carter or not, eagerly consented, and when they would have continued to call the little one Marie Sullivan, he begged them not to—saying that now, as the child was provided with such a home as it should have been her mother's right to grace, and as her future would be one befitting all her lady mother's culture, that he would not mar her

prospects by thrusting himself, comparatively uneducated as he was, and so inferior as he felt himself to be, in her path—he would rather that his identity be concealed from her; let her think that her parents had both died, and he would be happy in knowing that she was so well provided for—in being occasionally near her when she would not know of the fact. For that purpose he wished her name changed. His wishes were gratified, though the kind people wondered much at an affection which, seeming to be so deep, could thus make an entire surrender of its beloved object. That arrangement had been little more than completed when Carter arrived in the neighborhood, bringing with him little William Berkeley, whom he had taken from the convent in which he had temporarily placed him. To Sullivan's dismay, he did not bring the latter's child; and then for the first time the poor fellow discovered how sadly he had been the dupe of Carter's nefarious schemes. The whole of Carter's jealousy and hate of young Berkeley, his unrequited passion for Marie, the successive steps by which his plot of villainy had been executed—all were bared, and Sullivan discovered for the first time that the fury which had refused to spare its two fated objects would henceforth relentlessly pursue him, unless he yielded implicit assent to every future scheme. It threatened him with disclosure of the murder—it told with infernal triumph of the abduction of the little one which was to Sullivan as the apple of his eye; and when the poor, duped man, appalled, despairing, and desperate, sought for some outlet from his dreadful situation, Carter mockingly bade him remember that he was a wretched culprit,—on every side were proofs of his horrible guilt, and that did he set foot within the place from which he had taken Marie, it would only be to fall into the merciless hands of those whom young Berkeley had employed to avenge his wrongs; and Carter threatened further to remove Sullivan's little daughter, Cathleen, whom he had already abducted, to some place utterly beyond her unhappy father's reach; but he pledged himself, if Sullivan remained true to him, to take

the most tender care of her, and in the future, when all fear of discovery of Carter's villainy should be removed, to restore her, rich, educated and accomplished—he promised, however, that in the event of her dangerous illness, her father should be conducted to her.

"The meshes of that web of villainy were too intricately and skillfully woven about the wretched man to permit him to make an effort to escape, and when reflection convinced him that any attempt he might make to expose Carter's guilt would be futile because of his inability to produce proofs of the same, and that perhaps such endeavor on his part would only result in more suffering to himself, even perpetual separation from his child, he became the unresisting tool of Carter. Entirely abandoning his once steady habits of employment, he tried to drown his wild longing for his child, and his dreadful remorse, by indulging a growing appetite for liquor. Under that influence he was still weaker to oppose schemes of evil, and Carter, speedily becoming aware of that fact, plied the poor wretch with drink in order to induce a readier assent to his evil plots. Thus Sullivan sunk until he became at last so wandering a begger, rarely remaining two consecutive days in the same place, and taking mostly to the mountains, that people gave him the sobriquet of 'Rick of the Hills.' Everybody knew him because of his wandering habits, and while most persons were repelled, because of the repulsive exterior which his hard, wretched life had given him, no one feared him. It was not known that he was intimate with Carter, for it was a part of the latter's policy to conceal that fact. With the little boy he had in charge, Carter had taken up his residence in the immediate vicinity of the O'Donoghue homestead; he had sufficient means to live in a style which must proclaim to the simple country folk a person of no mean birth nor breeding, and as he was a regular attendant, and in time a generous benefactor of, the little parish chapel, he won the favor of the kind-hearted clergyman. Giving out that his youthful charge, whom he continued

to call by the name in the baptismal certificate which he had so fraudulently obtained, was the orphan child of dear deceased friends, he hired a nurse for it—a woman of the neighborhood whose gossipy character was in itself a recommendation to the wily Carter. He managed so that she should repeat incidents of his daily life and instances of his charity which must win for him the esteem and trust of the entire neighborhood. He succeeded ; not even Cairn O'Donoghue, the head of the O'Donoghue homestead, and a man whose virtues were written on every heart that ever knew him, was regarded with more favor than Mortimer Carter eventually received.

"His unrequited love for Marie had transferred itself with as wild an ardor to Marie's daughter. In the youthful lineaments of the child was a growing reproduction of her mother's face, and each time that Carter saw her, which he frequently did, through opportunities of his own making, he yearned to hasten the time in which, with Marie of marriageable age, he intended, by fair means or foul, to make her his wife. He was not well pleased that Sullivan had surrendered possession of her, but with his usual confidence in his own ability, he doubted not, at the arrival of the time, to be able to devise a scheme which should place her within his power.

"One day he was afforded an opportunity of saving the life of the youthful heir of the O'Donoghues—Carroll, a baby, who, springing from his nurse's arms, had fallen into the stream, on the bank of which little Marie, now known as Nora McCarthy, and Carter's little charge had been playing. Carter, who was present and witnessed the accident, saved the child. The boy's parents sought every means of testifying their gratitude ; Carter and his charge became constant visitors, and the former, in his business conference with Cairn O'Donoghue, evinced so much financial ability, as well as shrewd judgment in other matters, that the intimacy culminated in Carter making his abode with the family, and his youthful charge receiving the same care and attention as the children of the house.

"During this time the unhappy, wandering Sullivan—wandering always with the hope of somewhere meeting with his little one, and of whom he never could conceive that she was other than the infant who had been snatched from him,—frequently sought Carter by stealth to beg the whereabouts of his child; but the answer was always the same: the child was well, and well done for, but the time had not come to give her to her father; and then the wonted threats were repeated, and the liquor used, and 'Rick of the Hills' sunk again into his miserable cowardly state.

"Mrs. O'Donoghue, as beloved as her husband, died in giving birth to a girl two years the junior of the heir of the house, and the little family, now comprising the brother and sister, and the adopted girl and boy, were as fond and united as though really bound by the ties of kindred. When the boys became old enough, they were sent to college; it was the first separation among the young people, and it was sorely felt. But a greater trouble was to visit them; before the education of either was completed they were recalled to the death-bed of him who had been so true a father to them all. Cairn O'Donoghue died, appointing Mortimer Carter the legal guardian of his children. The boys returned to college, the girls lived daily lives of edification and blessing, while Carter apparently was so exemplary in his conduct that he had the entire trust and affection of his wards.

"On the completion of Carroll's collegiate course, and when he came home in the full vigor of buoyant manhood, Carter perceived what he had feared would happen—an affection springing up between Carroll and Nora; but he would do nothing just then to prevent it; he preferred to wait, feeling that before the affair would reach its climax, a scheme which he had already devised would prove an effectual bar. Accident favored him. The Fenian rising was in agitation, and Carroll, of the very temperament to be allured into the movement, participated with heart and soul in all its measures. Then was Carter's time. He was the idol of the impulsive

young fellow—to him Carroll confided everything; and to Mortimer now, believing that the latter was as devoted an adherent of the cause as he was himself, he repeated all that he knew of the secrets of the organization. It was easy then for Carter to connive at Carroll's arrest and conviction, and the young man was transported to Australia, and the ancient O'Donoghue homestead, with its broad, beautiful lands, encumbered by debt, owing to the expense of Carroll's trial, and other causes, passed from possession of its heirs, and was put into the market to be sold.

"Carter exulted that so much was accomplished; then, providing a moderately comfortable, but humble, home for the two girls, he proposed for the hand of Nora McCarthy; that was the first revelation which his ward had of his true character; he was scorned, and the favor with which he had been regarded was changed to indignation and contempt.

"Then his passion for revenge became active. He threatened them with eviction from the very shelter which, with pretended kindness, he had provided, unless Miss McCarthy consented: he was again spurned, and the two unprotected girls took refuge in the home of their life-long friend, the pastor of the village. All of Carter's transactions, feigning to be one in heart with the Fenians, and cloaking the free access which he was permitted to Tralee garrison under the pretense of securing information for the adherents of the Irish cause, were fully understood by poor Rick of the Hills; his wandering life enabled him to learn various items of news, and he was shrewd enough to fathom more of Carter's secrets than the latter desired him to do. Carter's sincerity was beginning to be doubted by others also; various reports were circulated about him, but with all that, he had sufficient powers of artifice to maintain, not alone his reputable standing, but the unreserved confidence of those partisans of the Irish cause who were most influential in his neighborhood. He had turned secret informer for the sake of the reward.

"Carroll O'Donoghue escaped from Australia and returned

safely to Ireland. He was in secret quarters waiting an opportunity to pay a stealthy visit to his sister and his affianced. Rick knew of his arrival, though Carter did not, and Rick had learned, through unguarded hints dropped by Carter, that information had been supplied to the authorities which would bring a military force to the very spot where Carroll was secreted in the bosom of a devoted band. Rick warned the unsuspecting fellows, without disclosing his own suspicion that it was Carter who had supplied the information—not that he did it to save the traitor, but lest the latter, discovering at any time that Rick had been in any instance untrue to him, might take the revenge he never ceased to threaten. The military force, with Captain Dennier at its head, marched to the spot to which they were ordered, only to find all flown whom they had expected to capture. On their return they lost themselves in the wild way by which they had to journey. Rick of the Hills saw them, and concealed himself, till, divining from their manner that they had lost their way, he was impelled, by the hope of perhaps learning something which might benefit Carroll O'Donoghue, to appear among them as a wild fellow who had little or no sense. He did so, and acted as guide for the party back to the garrison, where he met, to his own surprise, and to Carter's discomfiture, Mortimer Carter, and the latter learned from Rick of Carroll's presence in Ireland. His scheming now became more vigorous and deadly. He set every faculty to work to gain information which should insure young O'Donoghue's recapture ; and he succeeded so far as even to make the miserable Rick become at last the betrayer of Carroll—the latter was arrested just without the house which had been the shelter of his sister and his affianced. But the law was too slow for the traitor Carter—he would have O'Donoghue out of the way quickly ; and he planned an escape for the prisoner, then gave information to the authorities which should cost Carroll his life, either by a shot from one of the armed guards, or a speedier conviction when this attempt to escape

should be brought forward on the trial as evidence against the prisoner. Carter was also determined to press his suit with Nora McCarthy in a way which he fancied must compel her to accept him. He took Rick more into his confidence, and revealed to him for the first time all his mad passion for the beautiful girl; degraded as poor Sullivan was, he had yet sufficient manhood to express to Carter's face his indignation at the thought of such an alliance; but what was his horror and dismay when he found it proposed to him that he should claim this girl as his daughter! sufficient was known to Father Meagher to prove his claim, and then, to Rick's greater horror, he stated how that it was in view of this very project he, Carter, had concealed for all these years Cathleen Sullivan from her father. From the moment that he had learned of Rick's surrender of little Marie to the O'Donoghues, and knew what advantages would be hers, he thought how, should she, when of marriageable age, refuse his hand, he could humble her by producing Rick as her father—that was the plan by which he had intended to frustrate her marriage with Carroll O'Donoghue; and should it be insufficient to prevent it, at least it would cover her with shame. For the purpose of carrying out his cruel scheme he had continued to hide Cathleen Sullivan from her father; so doing gave him a power which always kept Rick his unresisting tool. And Rick was forced to consent. But Carter did not bargain for the issue. He had not correctly estimated Nora McCarthy's noble character. He had supposed that she would shrink from the horror and the shame of being this vagabond-beggar's daughter, and he had told Rick to place before her two alternatives—either to become Carter's wife, with the world remaining in ignorance of her parentage, or to refuse to do so, and be published as the daughter of Rick of the Hills. But Sullivan, dumbfounded at the noble manner in which she received his revelation, could not speak to her as Carter had bade him do—he could only endeavor to act his wretched part as best he might. Nora McCarthy, believing herself to

be Rick's child, yielded all to go with him—home, friends, the lover to whom she was affianced,—and her noble devotion to the unhappy wretch, her efforts to reclaim him, her pure, angelic character, touched and won his heart; he could no longer endure her sacrifice, and he came to me and told this story. Previously accident had given me information of a young woman, named Cathleen, whom Carter had brought when a baby to a widow living in the north of Ireland, and to whom he paid regular sums for the child's care. He claimed to be the little one's uncle, and he made occasional visits to see her. I had no hesitation in pronouncing her to be Sullivan's abducted child, and I saw the poor, unhappy father depart for the place of her abode.

"I have finished, my lord, and I await your answer."

He stood with folded arms, and head slightly bent forward, the flush on his cheeks deepened to a vivid glow. Lord Heathcote at last removed his hand, and raised his head; was that the stern, cold face which had dropped to its hidden position at the beginning of the tale—that white, aged looking countenance? every line had been brought forth with startling distinctness, every feature betrayed an agony upon which it was painful to look. He rose from his chair, and tottered to the priest, saying, in so cracked a voice that it might have belonged to eighty, rather than the fifty years he was;

"This cruelly injured husband of Marie—this Walter Berkeley—did he who unfolded to you this tale tell you who he was?"

The priest bowed low, and responded; "He did, my lord. Carter had unguardedly on one occasion imparted to him that knowledge. You, my lord, are the Walter Berkeley of my tale."

"Oh, God!"

The nobleman flung his hand wildly to his forehead, then, as if seized by some sudden convulsion, he clutched frantically at the air for a moment, and Father O'Connor, alarmed, hastened to support him.

"Thank you; I am better," he said, when he had rallied; and he strove to assume the wonted coldness of his voice, as he released himself from the gentle hold. "But this is an idle tale," he continued, quickly; "what proofs have you to sustain Marie Dougherty's innocence of all that has been imputed to her—what proofs to show that Sullivan's story is not a concoction to shield himself?"

"None, my lord, beyond what I have told you—she who could prove its truth has long since been accorded justice in Heaven."

"Do *you* believe it—did this mysterious tale carry conviction to *your* heart?" and the nobleman seemed to await the answer in trembling expectation.

"It did, my lord; full and entire!"

Lord Heathcote tottered to his chair, and sunk into it. The perspiration stood in beads upon his face, and his breath was labored. "You tell me," he said, speaking with difficulty, "that the daughter of this Marie Dougherty grew to be the image of her mother—is she aught like this?"

He pulled from his bosom a golden case, set round with pearls; touching the spring, it opened and revealed the counterpart of Nora McCarthy. The likeness was so exact and so vivid that the priest started, and his manner, more even than his words, expressed the resemblance which the picture bore to its living copy. He closed the case and returned it to his breast, then, leaning forward until his labored breath seemed to fan his listener's face, he said:

"The twin son of this Marie Dougherty whom Carter abducted—where is *he* now—what is *he* doing?"

"Living obscurely among the poor of Ireland, with no desire save to do what little good he can, and remain unknown to the world."

"Is he known to you?" The question was put in a painfully eager way.

"He is, my lord."

Lord Heathcote leaned back and closed his eyes; but th-

working of his mouth betrayed how little diminished was his inward agitation. After a few minutes he looked up, and said with the first natural tone of voice he had used since the conclusion of the startling tale:

"You have admitted that you know this son of Marie Dougherty whom Carter is said to have abducted—do you also know his twin brother, whom Berkeley was reported to have carried to England? did no suspicion ever enter the mind of Sullivan—did he never gain from Carter any information which might lead him to surmise the identity of this son?"

"Never, my lord, to my knowledge—I do not know the young man."

"But this daughter—this counterpart of her injured mother—you know her?"

"I do, my lord, well."

"And did you not, when this strange story was told you, immediately unfold it to this sister and brother, or did you not hint at portions of it which might work upon their minds?"

"No, my lord; my first and only impulse was to come to you. All that I have told you is buried in my own breast."

A look of satisfaction crossed Lord Heathcote's features, and he said in a still more natural tone: "Will you bind yourself to follow some instructions I desire to give you?"

"I shall be happy to do so, my lord, if they conflict with no duty."

"They will not. I would have you maintain profound secrecy about all that you have told me, and I would have you bring to me, here in the castle, this girl, Nora McCarthy—I would see her without having anything of this interview disclosed to her. Can you do this?"

A shade passed over the priest's face. "I do not know, my lord; but I can try, and should I fail, I shall acquaint your lordship."

Lord Heathcote bowed his assent, then touched the hand-bell at his side, and waving an adieu to Father O'Connor as the attendant entered the room, leaned back in his chair and closed his eyes.

CHAPTER LII.

THE WORK OF A SPY.

FATHER O'CONNOR, the prey of emotions as wild and varied as much of the scenery through which he passed on his return journey, hastened back to Tralee. There he found, to his relief, Nora once more in the bosom of her friends—Clare and she both inmates of genial Mrs. Murphy's home, Father Meagher coming up from Dhrommacohol as often as the duties of his pastoral charge would permit, and Dennier, in his courteous, kindly way dropping in as frequently as the laws of etiquette allowed, but far too seldom to satisfy the desire of his own impetuous heart; and he found also Tighe a Vohr once more installed as Dennier's valet; but he found all too sad at the thought of Carroll's approaching doom to wear even the semblance of a smile, and his own emotions, roused into wildest being by the scene through which he had so lately passed, were also subdued and saddened by the near approach of that dreadful end. He had little time, however, to give to deliberations other than those required for the delicate mission intrusted to him by Lord Heathcote, and he seized the first opportunity of requesting from Nora a private interview.

She had become anxious about Rick, and having received no word from him, her first thought was that Father O'Connor had perhaps some alarming intelligence to communicate.

"No," the priest said in answer to her fears when they were alone, "you have no cause for alarm; but perhaps you will wonder when I ask you to come immediately with me to Dublin."

"To Dublin—why?" she could hardly speak from surprise.

"I cannot tell you, Nora—I have only to ask you to sub-

mit blindly to my directions in this matter—I have only to say that I think it is well for you to go."

"Ah! I understand," she said quietly; "poor Rick"—and then she stopped and corrected herself—"my father is there ill; he has acquainted you of it, but he would not let me know, lest it should induce me to make some sacrifice, and he has written to you not to tell me; but you think it is my duty to know and to go to him. Is not that it?"

"No, Nora; that is not it; but this journey, if you will undertake it, may go far to right a wrong of the past, and to restore a reputation which has been foully defamed."

"Carroll," she said,—"it will take me from him."

"Only for a few days, and as they tell me all of you have been refused access to him for the present, your absence can hardly make much difference."

"I shall go," she said quietly. "How soon shall we start?"

"Can you be ready this evening?"

She gave a brief assent.

They turned away to join Clare, and at that instant the knocker on Mrs. Murphy's hall door sounded. It was Dennier, with the announcement that he was called to Dublin by a most importunate letter from Lord Heathcote, and that he would be obliged to start for the capital that very evening.

"Miss McCarthy and I are also going," said Father O'Connor; "with your kind permission, we would prefer to travel in your company."

It was the first announcement of Nora's intended journey, and Clare became frightened. "Going to Dublin!" she repeated in a dazed way! "going to leave Carroll and to leave me—what does it mean!"

Father O'Connor took her aside, in his own quiet, gentle way soothing her and explaining—without, however revealing aught that he was told to conceal,—why it was not practicable to grant her request to accompany Nora. She seemed satisfied, determining to return at once to Dhrommacohol, and there remain until Nora came back; and when the two gen-

tlemen, each actuated by the thought of how to provide an escort for her in the short time that remained before the beginning of their own journey, looked blankly at each other, she herself proposed that Tighe should accompany her. Dennier gladly assented, willingly submitting to the inconvenience of providing another servant during his stay in Dublin. Hasty preparations for the journeys began, and then all accompanied Clare to see her first upon her way. The little party were too absorbed in themselves to note how their steps were dogged from the moment of their departure from Mrs. Murphy's until their arrival at the place where Clare and Tighe and Shaun were to take the mail-car for Dhrommacohol. There the spy, a dark-browed, heavy-looking man, waiting only to see the little party standing together as if all were about to journey the same way, turned about, and hurrying into a side street, entered a place which seemed to comprise all the characteristics of a *shebeen*. There, lounging against the counter, was a man as villainous looking.

"Good day to you, Jack," said the new-comer; "faith you're in luck's way, for I have Carther's money to trate you wid; come, old fellow"—accompanying his last words by a hearty slap on Jack's stalwart shoulders,—"and we'll have a pint of mulled porter together."

With every evidence of delight, he to whom the invitation was given accepted it, and the two repaired to an inner room, which was filled up with round tables and wooden chairs.

"So things are progressing, Thade," said he who had been addressed as Jack, "between yoursel' and Carter?"

"Faith, they couldn't be foiner—I have nothin' to throuble me moind wid but watchin' Rick o' the Hills an' his young lady daughther, an' jist repoortin' all their movemints to ould Carther, an' he grases me fist for it ivery toime. First, whin the pair lived at Mrs. Murphy's, it seems he didn't have any watch on thim, but jist as they were lavin' there he gev me the job. Well, I thracked thim closely. They wint from Mrs. Murphy's to a poor place intoirely, an' I used to see the

young lady—it'd be a sin to call her anything else, even if she is Rick's daughther, be rayson o' her beauty,—goin' out as if it moight be on business, an' goin' out o' her way to pass the jail; well, I tould ould Carther the whole o' it, an' I don't know what happened, or what was betune thim, but what do you think o' this, Jack?"—Thade's voice descended to a very low whisper, and his head leaned forward till it almost touched that of his listener—"the ould sinner planned to carry her off; to take her be stealth away from her father. He had mesel', an' Shaun Hurley, and Jimmy Carberry, all ingaged, an' it was to be the most parfect abduction at all. He'd have no difficulty in the world in gettin' into the house, for he was already purvided wid a skeleton kay to open the hall dure, an' we were to folly him up to Rick's apartmints, an' he was to rap for admission, an' invint some sthory that'd make Rick open to us, whin we were to fall on Rick an' overpower him, an' thin secure the young lady. A carriage was to be in waitin', an' we were all to dhrive off to a distant part intoirely. Well, that was all fixed, Jack, for the noight afther Mr. O'Donoghue's sintince was passed, an' we were in readiness, whin, what did I see that viry mornin' but Rick, an' his daughther, an' Mrs. Murphy, all goin' to Mrs. Murphy's house, an' I found out that they had lift where they lived, intoirely. Whin I tould that to ould Carther he was loike a ragin' madman; you see he was afeered to folly up his scheme in Mrs. Murphy's house, bein' a different place intoirely, an' moreover, Mrs. Murphy havin' a husband, an' two young min o' sons that it moightn't be well to encounther. So he jist had to let the matther dhrop until he could invint another plan. He tould me, howiver, to continue the watch, an' I did, an' whin I repoorted how the young lady began to go out agin alone, he was hopin' that she'd go out some evenin' alone; and I had me ordhers, me an' Shaun Hurley, who was to be always ready wid a carriage widin hearin' o' me whistle. Me ordhers were to rush up to her, an' hould her in such a way that she couldn't scream while I whistled for

Shaun, an' the pair o' us were to hustle her into the carriage. But that too didn't happen, Jack, for the rayson that she niver wint out afther dark, an' there was no chance o' kidnappin' her in the middle o' the open sthrate in dayloight. Well, now she's off to-day wid some o' her frinds for Dhrommacohol, an' how ould Carther will take that I'm powerliss to say."

"And Rick of the Hills"—asked Jack,—"did he go to Dhrommacohol to-day too?"

"I didn't see him; he's away somewhere, for I haven't laid eyes on him since the mornin' he wint wid his daughther to Mrs. Murphy's—roight afther that I saw him lave the house, but as he didn't have the young lady wid him, I didn't moind follying him, to me own loss, for it's Carther that's anxious to know where Rick is—he offered to double what he gives me if I'd foind out for him, an' I've been strainin' me eyes wherever I'd be, but it's no use; Rick isn't in Tralee. Come, drink man, an' we'll have another pint afore I go to give me repoort to Carther."

The second pint was ordered, and over its inspiriting contents the boon friends grew more genial and more communicative.

"It was a great surprise," said he who had already imparted so much information, "whin Carther turned informer in the open coort—it med the greatest sthir that was med in Tralee for many a day."

"Well then," answered Jack, "it's past my understanding why it should; Carter was suspected all along of giving information to the government—sure how could he make the money he has, if it wasn't for that?"

"True for you," was the response; "but somehow, Carter had a way wid him that med some payple thrust him roight in the face o' the decate he moight be playin' at that minit. You moind, Jack, the toime he was robbed in his room o' a cartain paper—the toime that he said two min rushed in an' med him insinsible, an' thin sarched him till they found the paper they wanted?"

"I do," answered Jack.

"Well, you moind how he laid Tighe a Vohr down for that—I heerd him say that in me own prisince, an' he had sthrong thoughts o' takin' the law an Tighe; but he found he couldn't, for he hadn't one proof to bring forward. He'd have to shwear to the man who rushed at him, an' the clarest case he'd be able to make o' it would be that Tighe had hired the parties to rob him; an' even that same he wouldn't be able to prove—so he had to dhrop it. An' it was said in McGinnis's the other noight"—again the voice dropped to a very low whisper—"that Carther wouldn't have gone on the witness shtand himsel' only for the loss o' the paper he was robbed av,—he was afeered if that tistimony was wantin' he'd lose the money that he gets for his informin'."

Jack nodded his head in knowing corroboration of the statement, and both worthies, having exhausted their budget of contraband news, and drained the last of their mulled porter, rose to depart. He who had been addressed as Thade wended his way to Carter's lodgings.

That gentleman was only then breakfasting; a late debauch—the state of his conscience, and the failure of his plans goaded him to deep potations—keeping him in bed till long past noon. He ordered Thade to be admitted, and without relinquishing his efforts to masticate the grilled bone before him, he said with his mouth full:

"Well, Thade, what's the news now?"

"The divil a liss than Miss Sullivan is off to Dhrommacohol wid Miss O'Donoghue, an' that Englishman that goes to Mrs. Murphy's so much lately, an' a young praste, an' Tighe a Vohr."

Carter dropped his bone, and ceased to masticate. "When?" he asked.

"They wint in the last mail-car that lift."

"And Rick of the Hills—where was he?" Carter's voice had become agitated.

"The divil a know I know—sure there's nayther hide nor hair o' him to be had in Tralee."

Carter rose—his agitation would find its old vent—he must pace the room, and he did so, stopping after intervals to rub his face, as if that action might help to clear his intricate thoughts. His visitor watched with a look expressive of his own shrewd conclusions. Carter paused at length. "Will you run down to Dhrommacohol, Thade, and keep the same watch there that you did here? you know the place well, and it will not be difficult for you to act the spy on Miss Sullivan's movements, and report to me by letter; you are able to write, I believe?"

"Oh, I can write, Mr. Carther, aisy enough—it's only the spellin' that bothers me; but it'd be unconvanient for me to lave Tralee now, onless you'd make it worth me while."

"Certainly, Thade, I'll do that and welcome; you shall have no cause to complain—only serve me well."

"Never fear, Mr. Carther—I'll sarve ye to the bist o' me powers!" and having received from Carter the stipend which was always the reward of his report, and promising to depart that very evening for Dhrommacohol, Thade took his leave.

Once more the traitor began his agitated stride of the room, and this time all his fiendish emotions were suffered to appear in his bloated countenance—rage, hate, jealousy struggled together in his breast, and swept by turns over a face in which the stamp of a guilty soul had long been set. "Rick has at last discovered upon me!" he said, as he walked; "it must be so, or he would be seen somewhere; and that is why Nora has returned to Dhrommacohol. They all know the story now, and what will become of me—what, oh what, if any of them should take steps to acquaint Lord Heathcote? Pshaw! what a fool I am! there is no proof to fasten the guilt upon me, but there is every proof to place it on Rick; I shall not fear." He straightened himself and walked with a firmer step. "I have wealth, and when I receive the amount which I expect for having turned witness against Carroll O'Donoghue, I shall have enough to purchase the O'Donoghue estate, and when Carroll is hung I may find means to obtain possession

of Nora. If I do not, I shall at least gall them all by my ownership of the O'Donoghue property, even though I cannot make of it a home. It was a desperate stroke," he continued, folding his arms and walking with slower gait, "to turn open informer in the court, but the loss of the paper I had obtained from Carroll left me no other alternative—the case was to be closed that day, and the testimony did not seem to be sufficient to fully convict him; did I not go on the stand I should have been despoiled, not alone of the O'Donoghue homestead, but of my revenge—the execution of Carroll. Beside, there was nothing more to be gained by pretending to be true to the prisoner, and by informing thus openly I could crush both him and his affianced,"—speaking with bitter mockery—"Nora Sullivan, or Marie Berkeley."

He strode to the closet and helped himself bountifully to the contents of one of the bottles on the shelf; then, apparently calmed and fortified, he returned to the table, and prepared to resume operations on his grilled bone.

"No," he said, suspending his knife and fork in the air for a moment, "I am safe—and I shall remain quietly waiting Carroll's hanging, and Thade's reports from Dhrommacohol, and then, when I have purchased the O'Donoghue estate, I shall plan for other successes."

He bent to his breakfast with renewed ardor, compensating by his animal gratification for all his recent discomfiture and anxiety.

CHAPTER LIII.

FATHER AND SON.

THE journey to Dublin was made with all the speed of moderate steam travel, but the little party, each of whom was earnestly wrapped in his or her anxious and wandering thoughts, could have wished that the speed was increased—Nora, because of the fears of being delayed from Carroll; Father O'Connor, from a certain anxiety to know what would result from the journey; and Dennier, owing to a wild desire to learn at once on what business Lord Heathcote wished to see him; he questioned not how his lordship knew the very address to which to send his summons—he deemed it the result of accident; and when he looked at his two companions, reading with pain the care and grief marked in their countenances, he fancied *he* knew the cause of their mysterious journey to Dublin—that it was to beg Lord Heathcote to use his influence for some mitigation of the sentence of the beloved prisoner; yes, he was sure that such was the object—the silence of both regarding the cause of their journey, the refusal to permit Clare to accompany them, all tended to prove the truth of his conjecture, and he almost sickened as he thought how worse than useless would be their effort. Having arrived at the capital, they repaired to one of the hotels for refreshment and a brief rest, in order that pale, tired Nora might be somewhat recruited. The afternoon was far advanced, but Father O'Connor would make the effort to see Lord Heathcote, unseemly as might be the hour.

"You are not too fatigued to make a visit with me?" he said kindly to Nora.

"No,—my anxiety lends me strength; but surely you can tell me now where we are going."

The priest flushed slightly. "Pardon me, Nora, if even yet I must refuse to gratify you; it seems cruel to keep you in such suspense, but I am bound—I have given my word, and I cannot break it; and this affair, so mysterious and harrowing to you, is equally so to me."

There was such a quiver of sadness in his voice that the gentle girl's heart was at once touched; she put her hand upon his arm with the old fond, familiar touch of their early childhood, and answered: "Forgive me, Charlie; and I shall repress my curiosity—I shall not ask a single question more, but simply do your bidding."

How the young priest quivered at her touch; how he yearned to strain her to him, and to tell her that that paternal affection which had always existed between them was theirs by right—that he was her brother! but the time had not yet come, and he turned away to meet Dennier, who had just returned from his room, where he had made a careful toilet for *his* visit to the castle—a visit which *his* impatience would not allow him to defer.

"Are you going out?" he asked; "to what part of the city? perhaps it lies in my direction; and as I am rather more familiar with the streets of Dublin, I may be of some service as an escort."

The priest seemed a little nonplussed, but a moment's reflection enabled him to answer: "Mr. Dennier"—it had been the young man's earnest request to affix no military title to his name,—"for certain reasons I have refrained from speaking of the immediate place of our destination, but I may tell you now: it is Dublin Castle."

"Ah!" young Dennier's countenance kindled,—and he seemed about to burst into some ardent statement; but he evidently controlled the impulse, for the light died as suddenly out of his face, and he was silent for a moment. He was more than ever convinced of the truth of his surmise, and he had, during that instant that his face shone, burned to tell how he guessed the import of their mission, and how he would

fain dissuade them, knowing that the only result would be failure and bitter humiliation; but it was so delicate a matter, and they had been so silent about it, that a second thought prompted him to restrain his speech. He said instead after that moment's silence: "Permit me, then, to be your escort to the castle—being somewhat familiar with the place, perhaps I can facilitate your interview with the party whom you wish to see."

"But your own visit to the castle—our going now may interfere with, or delay it," said the priest.

"No," answered Dennier, "there is sufficient time for me; I beg you to allow me to perform this service."

Father O'Connor seemed to accept gratefully, and Nora, despite her promise to repress her curiosity, looked the latter feeling from her beautiful eyes. The three repaired to the castle, and there, just as they were about to enter, the priest admitted that it was Lord Heathcote he wished to see. Dennier expressed no surprise, but Nora started, and she could scarcely restrain the exclamation upon her lips; yet, true to her promise, she did not question, and the young ex-officer, having accompanied them to the room in waiting, whence Father O'Connor dispatched his name to the nobleman, he took a kindly leave. The answer was almost immediately returned, that his lordship would see the Reverend Father O'Connor.

"You will not fear to wait my return here?" he whispered to Nora.

"Oh, no," she answered, striving to accompany her words with a smile, but her surprise and anxiety were too painful. She was not left long alone; in a comparatively short time Father O'Connor returned:

"Lord Heathcote desires to see you, Nora,"—trying to speak quietly, but his manner betrayed more agitation than she had perceived ever before. She rose to accompany him, but her limbs trembled so that she was obliged to cling to him for support.

"Why, what is the matter?" he asked; "you have nothing to fear."

"I do not know why I should feel so," she answered; "but oh! Charlie, this dreadful mystery oppresses me."

Her looks gave evidence of the truth of her statement—her cheeks were flushed to the deepest crimson, her eyes sparkling with strange excitement, and the small chiseled mouth parted to emit the labored breathing; but all only enhanced her beauty, which, despite the plainness of her garb, never had been more striking nor brilliant.

"Pray!" whispered the priest.

She did pray all during the ascent to Lord Heathcote's apartments, and even for the first moment after her entrance into the presence of the nobleman, her lips moved with the closing of her favorite petition, the "Hail Mary."

His lordship did not look at her at first—he sat in his invalid chair with his hand before his face; and it was only when his visitors stood fully within the room, and the usher had withdrawn, that he dropped his hand, and rising, stood before them.

What strange feeling was it which came over poor bewildered Nora, as she met the earnest, unveiled gaze of those dark, stern eyes, as she looked into that worn and prematurely aged face, bent now upon her with so singularly wistful an expression? what wild emotion was it which, threatening one moment to stifle her, the next left her pale and faint, clinging to Father O'Connor's arm? But the eyes were withdrawn from her, and a cold, careless voice was saying:

"I have heard that both of you favor the prisoner who is under sentence of death in Tralee—are you aware that this is treason upon your part to the government?"

And the stern eyes were again fixed upon Nora, as if an answer was expected from her. But she only clung the tighter to her companion. His lordship resumed, still looking at Nora:

"I have been told that you are the affianced of this young

man ; you then love him, I presume ?" He spoke slowly, as if he took pleasure in the agony which the words seemed to cause her : "You would then suffer with him, I suppose—you would even suffer for him, perhaps ?"

Nora never knew by what impulse she was prompted, as the nobleman's last words passed his lips, nor could she ever explain how it had occurred, but she suddenly found herself on her knees at his feet, wildly imploring Carroll's life.

"Oh, my lord !" she said, with no thought beyond the wild, uncontrollable feeling of the present moment, "if it is in your power, save him—use your influence that they may not take his young life,—spare hearts that are already wretched, and which this stroke must surely break—do this, my lord, and the life-long prayers and gratitude of many shall be yours !"

"Rise, young lady ; you ask of me what is not consistent with my office." He turned away, as if he would not witness the priest's efforts to raise Nora and quiet her.

"Take me away," she moaned—"I am fainting—ill !"

"Will your lordship excuse us? we must retire," Father O'Connor said, deeply agitated.

The nobleman returned : "Yes ; and to-morrow I would see you alone,"—speaking to the priest.

Father O'Connor bowed, and the attendant, entering in response to Lord Heathcote's summons, conducted them out. In the waiting-room, whither the young clergyman paused to allow Nora to recover the strength of her tottering limbs, a servant entered, saying he was sent by Lord Heathcote to see that the young lady received any attention she might require ; but Nora only pleaded the more eagerly to be taken back to the hotel, and there, when alone in her room, having assured the priest and Dennier, who had met them on their return from the castle, that she only needed rest, she gave free vent to the anguish which had been so cruelly renewed by the failure of her impulsive plea.

Dennier, from a feeling of delicacy, still restrained all utterance of the thoughts which burned all the more to break into speech since Nora's disturbed manner gave such vivid color to his suspicions.

CHAPTER LIV.

THE SUMMONS TO DUBLIN.

DENNIER had not long to wait for *his* interview with Lord Heathcote—almost immediately that his name was dispatched the summons came for him to repair to his lordship. He was not prepared for the altered appearance of the nobleman—the hair, which he had left but sparsely streaked with gray, was now as white as if the snows of eighty winters had frosted it; the strong, stern face, bearing little mark to indicate that it had more than passed a manly prime, bore painful evidence of premature age; and the form, so erect, so firm, so full of the vigor of its best days, was now bowed and tottering. Contrary to his usual custom, he was standing when Dennier entered, and as the latter marked with painful surprise all the evidence of the mysterious decay, there came into his heart, with the strange feeling which the sight of Lord Heathcote always caused, a pity akin to filial tenderness for the nobleman.

Beyond the respectful greeting of the visitor, to which his lordship responded by a slight bow, there was not a word spoken for some seconds, and the young man was beginning to feel a painful embarrassment. But Lord Heathcote spoke at last:

"I have sent for you, Dennier, to give you a final chance. Youth is ever impetuous, and perhaps even now you regret the hasty action of your resignation; a position, wealth and in the future perchance, a title await you; there is but one condition required upon your part: the severing at once of every attachment you may have formed in this country."

"I cannot, my lord,—not if a kingdom lay at my feet!" The voice was low, but unmistakably firm.

"Who is the object of this loyal attachment of yours?" Lord Heathcote asked hurriedly.

"The only sister of the prisoner who is to be executed in Tralee two weeks from to-morrow," was the unhesitating answer.

"And there is an engagement between you?"

"On the contrary, my lord, no hint which might be construed into affection upon either side has ever been dropped—the esteem, the love which from the first I have borne this estimable girl, I was compelled to keep within my own breast because I was the hound upon her brother's path, becoming finally his captor; she was noble enough to resent the friendly feeling I fain would have expressed, pointing out its inconsistency with my profession. Since, however, it is no longer my duty to be her enemy, my heart rests itself in the satisfaction of being near her, to render what little service may be in my power when the blow given by her brother's execution shall have lost some of its pain, and when I shall have asserted my manhood by devoting myself to some humble toil; then, should she refuse to reciprocate my regard, I shall still remain near her to give her such protection as may be in my power."

Lord Heathcote did not answer for a moment; then he spoke hurriedly, and with painful agitation: "Dennier, you are the son of one near and dear to me, but his heart was broken by the perfidy of an Irish wife—she abandoned her husband for an earlier love; and the deceived man, from that moment in which he was so ruthlessly dishonored, in which all his wild affection for his young wife was so cruelly betrayed, shut himself within the recesses of his own wretched heart—his pride would suffer him to inflict no punishment on the guilty ones; it would not permit him to blazon to the world the defamation of his honorable name. His Irish marriage had been a well-kept secret from his English friends—he would throw the veil of secrecy more profoundly about it.

"He took back to England with him the child which the

guilty mother had left in the home she had deserted, and he put it away from his household, and gave to it another name; and though he provided for it, and took extraordinary interest in its career, people never dreamed of the secret motive of all that singular concern.

"Honors and a title came to the unhappy father; peers sought him for an alliance with their daughters, the favor of the very court became his, and unsought, and unwished, wealth and influence showered about him—but his heart remained the cold, proud, aching thing it had become on the wreck of his early happiness. He could not marry—with all his pride and sternness, with all the guilt of her who had so miserably fallen, he could not shut her entirely from his heart. He wore her picture—she had given it to him in the days of their betrothal, and, oh, bitter confession! he loved her still.

"The son grew up to win honor and distinction by the rectitude of his conduct, and the father was secretly proud of him, for secretly he well loved him; but that son now refuses to comfort a heart so long in sorrow!"

Dennier could no longer control himself—the face, the voice, the manner of the nobleman thrilled him too earnestly, and too strangely, for him to doubt longer the suspicion which had entered his mind soon after the nobleman had begun his last remarks. He bounded forward:

"This story is your own, Lord Heathcote—you are my father!"

The nobleman's arms opened, and Dennier was clasped within them—heart to heart, face against face.

CHAPTER LV.

CARTER'S HIGH HOPES.

THE fatigue of the journey, the pain of the suspense to which she had been subjected, the renewal of her grief in the failure of her plea to Lord Heathcote, told somewhat alarmingly on Nora, when the next morning she struggled from her room to meet Father O'Connor. The latter was wondering a little at the absence of Dennier—he had not returned to the hotel since his departure for the castle the evening before.

"And I hesitate to leave you here alone," said the priest to Nora, "while I call upon Lord Heathcote."

"Oh, no!" she answered, smiling faintly; "I can rest in my room until your return. Perhaps then you will be able to tell me the object of this journey."

"Perhaps so," he replied; "but I assure you, Nora, it was not to subject you to the pain which our visit yesterday gave you."

"Certainly not; I understand that!" striving to speak cheerfully.

With some misgiving as to whether the solitude and retirement of her own room were best for her in her present apparently weak state, he left her, trusting, however, that the period of his absence would be very brief.

In answer to the message which he sent to Lord Heathcote, he was told that his lordship was too ill for an interview, but he was requested to call on the morrow. Disappointed, and more anxious than ever, he hastened back to Nora.

"To stay here another day!" she exclaimed in sad dismay; but that was her only murmur; she saw that Father O'Connor deemed it better to wait, and she tried to appear

resigned. Later in the day, when they were both growing alarmed at Dennier's continued absence, a servant bearing a note arrived from the castle—it was from Dennier, addressed to the clergyman, and ran:

"Forgive my apparent desertion—I am engaged with something that may benefit our dear Carroll. Do not on any account return to Tralee until you have seen me, and tell Miss Sullivan not to be anxious because of the delay.

Yours,

WALTER."

Nora was instantly aglow. "What is it, Charlie? is he, this dear Captain Dennier, using his influence with Lord Heathcote—will it be a commutation of the sentence?" She seemed to have recovered in a second all her strength.

"I do not know—I fear to allow myself to surmise," answered the priest; "but pray, Nora."

* * * * * * *

Carter's spy, Thade, had found quarters far too comfortable in Dhrommacohol to care to report truthfully to his employer. With money to treat old and long-absent cronies, with nothing to do but plan for his comfort and enjoyment the whole day long, and with a quiet, refreshing country life about him, he compromised with his conscience by saying that, of course, as he did not see Nora, she must be leading a very peaceful, domestic life within doors. Did he report the contrary, did he conscientiously say that he saw nothing of her, neither in the chapel on Sunday mornings, where she would be certain to be, nor anywhere in the district of Dhrommacohol, he well knew that he would be instantly recalled, and perhaps the means of earning his comfortable stipends taken entirely from him. So he wrote that Nora was quietly living in the little pastoral residence, and Carter, not doubting the report, was satisfied, and with his brazen confidence, constantly assuring himself that he was safe, he waited for the execution of Carroll O'Donoghue. A week after Thade's departure, Carter was somewhat startled one morning to receive a letter with an

official seal, and marked with Lord Heathcote's coat of arms; it was from his lordship, speaking in terms which, though ambiguous, still might be construed by a conceited mind into a gratifying significance, and such an interpretation Carter put upon them; his round red face glowed with delight, and it increased when he found on further perusal that his immediate presence was requested at Dublin Castle.

"Ah," he said, rubbing his hands together when he had read the letter a third time, "I have nothing to fear from any quarter—if Dennier told his lordship the hints I dropped regarding his birth, evidently it has not angered Lord Heathcote, and should he tax me with betraying anything of his secret, I can explain the matter by saying that I was provoked to it by Dennier's insolence, but that I was careful all the time to say no more than these mere hints." He took up the letter again, and reading for a fourth time its contents, continued to soliloquize: "It looks as if I were to receive immediately the sum which will enable me to purchase the O'Donoghue estate—his lordship hints at my reward for such faithful services having been too long delayed—egad! but luck is turning in my favor at last; Carroll O'Donoghue hung, his estate mine, and with money to boot, I think then the means will not be wanting to make dainty Nora mine, too." He put down the letter and gave himself up to thought for a moment. Then, rousing suddenly, he said, as he began to bustle about the apartment: "Well, things will keep here until I return—I'll be off to-night."

He would not have been so elated, nor would he have started on his journey with such assured confidence, could he have given one look into the little pastoral residence at Dhrommacohol. There, also, much about the same time, a letter had been received from Dublin, but it came in Dennier's hand, begging Father Meagher and Clare to come on immediately and join Father O'Connor and Nora; it also requested that the clergyman should telegraph the time of their start. There was nothing more—it did not even hint,

as Dennier's note to Father O'Connor had done, of efforts being made in Carroll's behalf.

And Clare, wild with wonder and anxiety, appealed to the old clergyman for an explanation; but he was as powerless as herself to give one

"You will go?" she said; "you will start immediately? perhaps, oh, perhaps it has some reference to Carroll!"

"Yes," was the reply; "I can send Moira down to ask Father McShane to take my place here, and we can start in the morning."

Clare's face slightly fell—to wait till morning was so long, though she knew that even did they leave Dhrommacohol immediately they would reach Tralee too late to take the train for Dublin.

Moira, with an injunction to be quick, was dispatched on her errand to Father McShane.

Tighe a Vohr, since the time that he had accompanied Miss O'Donoghue from Tralee, now little more than a week, had twice performed the journey to Tralee. He could not keep himself entirely from his master's prison, though the grim exterior was all that he was allowed to see; and he was equally anxious to be near Clare, that he might learn the first news of the two who had made such a mysterious journey to Dublin; he had his own wild hopes regarding that journey, and many were the fervent petitions the faithful fellow put up to Heaven that his hopes might be realized. Now, when Moira confided to him the story of the intended journey of Father Meagher and Clare, he jumped into the air, and gave one of his peculiar whistles:

"Faith, Moira, but that's rale news—to Dublin, eh, the pair o' thim is goin'? now, mark me words, Moira, but there's somethin' big afoot; an' I suppose they'll go widout as much as axin' me nor Shaun to go wid thim! well, that's not to me notion o' how things should be done at all, an' mesel' an' Shaun'll jist folly thim, an' they won't know a word about it till they see us both in Dublin along wid thimsel's."

"Yes, and leave me," pouted Moira; "you are always going away *somewhere* just as soon as you get here—I don't believe in the affection you say you have for me!"

"Now, Moira Moynahan, was there iver a man as thried as I am? betune me anxiety for the masther, an' the sthrivin' that I have to kape me mother in timper, an' the way that I'm humorin' Corny O'Toole jist to save him from despair, an' the manner that I'm takin' to show Father Meagher how mebbe it's a saint in sackcloth an' ashes I'd be some day, to have you at me now; faith, it's enough to crass an angel! don't I wear the sign o' me pledge to you, ivery day in the year?" He took off his wretched-looking hat, and pointed to the dirty, tattered mass of ribbon at its side. "Isn't it a burnin' shame for me, a dacent b'y as I am, wid a characther for sarvin' gintlemin that can't be bate in the whole o' Ireland—isn't it a burnin' shame, I say, to have me head disgraced be the loike o' that? an' it's all owin' to you, Moira Moynahan; you won't give me another kapesake that'd enable me to dispinse wid this!" and he angrily clapped the dilapidated head-gear again on his brown curls.

"Well, I can't help it," pouted Moira; "uncle won't let me receive you as a suitor, and not even for you, Tim Carmody, shall I disobey my dear old uncle!" She drew herself up, her air of willful firmness making her look prettier than ever to the enamored eyes of her lover.

"Nor would I ax you to, Moira darlin'; but God is good, an' mebbe He'd put pity for us both in yer uncle's heart, an' whin he sees how sober an' shteady I am, mebbe it's not always he'd be houldin' back his consint."

"I don't know about that," said Moira, shaking her pretty head, and directing one of her arch glances at Tighe.

"Na bockalish," said Tighe; "anyway, we'll not moind biddin' the divil good-morrow till we mate him—so kape up yer heart, Moira, an' perhaps it'll all come roight yet!"

Moira with some affright remembered her errand. "And uncle told me to be so quick!" she said.

"Well, run on now," said Tighe; "an' I'll run alongside o' you, an' we'll be there in no toime."

"No, Tighe; I'll not let you take a foot with me—I'll go the quicker without you!" and without waiting for his answer she hurried on.

But Tighe would be true to his determination of accompanying her, and he followed, never suffering himself quite to overtake her, however, while Shaun, seeming equally impressed with the maneuver, followed directly behind his master. The procession was the same on the return, and to Moira's dismay, Father Meagher saw it from the window of his study, where he had been anxiously waiting the return of his niece.

"Do not attempt to excuse yourself, Moira," he said sternly; "I saw enough to give me all the facts."

"Well, but uncle, I wouldn't even let him come with me; he followed me himself, and Shaun followed him."

"And a pretty precious pair you are, both you and Tighe! Go to your work, miss!"

Moira obeyed, muttering when she had reached her own domain: "It's dreadful hard to be treated this way; but Tighe loves me, and I don't think he'd ever marry any one else, even if uncle never gave his consent."

Father Meagher and Clare were early astir next morning, and after some directions to young Father McShane, whose delicate health exempted him from regular duty, and some parting orders to Moira regarding any interviews she might be tempted to have with Tighe a Vohr, at which Moira privately laughed, knowing more about Tighe's intentions than did the worthy priest, the two departed. What was their astonishment when, having arrived in Dublin, and Father Meagher was about to engage a cab to take them to Father O'Connor and Nora, Tighe a Vohr and Shaun stood suddenly before them.

"Forgive me, yer riverince, for follyin' you, but be rayson o' me anxiety about you all I couldn't shtay behoind. I've

an inklin' someway or another that this journey'll bring good to the young masther, an' I kem on to know the good news as soon as the rist o' you would."

"Well, as to that, my good fellow," said Father Meagher, when he had recovered from his surprise, "we are as much in the dark about the object of our journey as you are. But jump in,"—pointing to the cab—"we'll find a place for you."

"But Shaun?" said Tighe, ruefully.

"Give him the order to jump in too," said the priest, laughing. The dog required no second bidding; he was soon ensconced in a corner of the cushion, opposite Clare, and all having entered, they were rapidly driven to the hotel.

Father O'Connor and Nora could hardly believe it possible when they were summoned to meet the new-comers, but the greetings on both sides were none the less eager and warm.

"What does it mean?" said Nora and Clare in a breath, when Father Meagher had told all about his mysterious summons, and Father O'Connor had narrated simply what he had said to Nora, adding, however, an account of their interview with Lord Heathcote, and dwelling on Dennier's absence. The latter had not yet returned, and beyond that one singular note, he had sent them no word. "It is, it must be," said both girls, "something about Carroll; he will be saved!"

And hope once more asserted its sway, and under its influence their countenances and their manner resumed almost all their olden brightness.

Father Meagher was not so hopeful, though, loth to repress the buoyancy of the two eager girls, he pretended to share their sanguine expectations. Father O'Connor was so unusually agitated that the older priest could not but express his suspicion that the young clergyman was in possession of more knowledge than he had imparted.

"I am, father," he answered; "but I cannot tell you yet."

A few hours later, and there promised to be at last an end to their suspense—a message came desiring them all, providing Father Meagher and Clare had arrived, to repair to the castle that evening.

CHAPTER LVI

CARTER CONFRONTED WITH HIS GUILT.

"EGAD, Dennier! but you are the biggest puzzle of the age—what with your melancholy that nothing could chase away, then your attachment to some wonderful Irish beauty, and after that your resignation for no reason under the sun but to gratify an outlandish whim, you were enough to turn sager heads than mine; and now you burst into my quarters with hints of mysteries that are enough to make one's hair stand on end!" And Captain Crawford, with a quizzical expression on his face, approached the flushed and excited Dennier, and began to make a critical survey of the latter's person.

"Well, well," said Dennier good-humoredly, "this evening, I fancy, will end it all; and after that, Harry, you shall hear one of the strangest stories it ever has been your fate to listen to—something that will make you cry from your heart: 'truth is indeed stranger than fiction!'"

"Let me see how much I already know," said Crawford playfully, and holding up his fingers, he began to enumerate upon them each assertion that he made. "You have told me that this informer, Carter, has been at more rascally business than betraying unsuspicious Fenians, and that, by a decoy letter, you have caged him so far as to have him already in the castle, firmly believing that he is about to receive some reward from the government, whereas to-night he will be unmasked before those whom he has foully injured; you have also told me that two near friends of the injured parties, summoned from some country place to be present at this unmasking, have arrived; further, that you have not trusted yourself in

the presence of any of these parties who are to come in obedience to their summons to the castle this evening, lest your agitation should betray what you desire to conceal for the present; then, also, you have written to two other parties, away up somewhere, to come at once, and be present at this mysterious something that is to happen, but so far you have received no reply from them. Now, Dennier, in Heaven's name give me the key to all this!"

"I cannot, Harry; not till after to-night," was the tremulous response.

"Will you come to me, no matter what the hour, when the business, whatever it is, is over?" asked Crawford.

"Yes, Harry; I give you my word—I shall either come to you, or send you a message to come to us."

"Us!" repeated Crawford; "by Jove! Walter, but you have me as excited as yourself!"

Dennier laughed; it was so like one of his olden bursts of merriment before either had left England, that Crawford could not refrain from saying:

"Well, whatever this latest mystery is, it has had a most refreshing effect upon you."

The young ex-officer did not reply, but waving back a laughing adieu, he left the room.

The hour arrived which had been appointed for so strange an assemblage within the walls of Dublin Castle, and then at last the four anxious and mystified persons who came from the hotel met Dennier; he awaited them in an apartment belonging to Lord Heathcote's suite, to which they were conducted, and he met them with so beaming a face, and so joyful a manner, that the hope which had fired the hearts of the two girls now flamed more ardently.

Clare's eyes turned eloquently upon him as she said: "You have favorable news to give us of my brother?"

"I cannot tell you anything yet, Miss O'Donoghue," was his response; "I have only to request you to be very patient for a little while. And now"—turning to Father O'Connor,—"Lord Heathcote would see you first alone."

The young priest repaired to one of the inner apartments to which the attendant, summoned by Dennier, conducted him. Lord Heathcote met him; not sitting, as Father O'Connor had seen him on the two previous occasions, but standing and nervously tapping the floor with a cane.

"Mr. O'Connor," he said, speaking rapidly, "I cannot convince myself of the truth of the strange tale you have told me; reflection but makes me think that this man, Sullivan, fabricated the whole to hide his own guilt; you see there are no proofs further than Sullivan's own statement, and though he has been imperatively summoned here, there is not even a reply from him."

Pardon me, my lord, Father Meagher is here, and he can testify to the insanity of your dead wife; he can also bear evidence to the fact that Carter came to reside in Dhrommacohol with a boy in his charge who answered to the description of one of your sons."

"Pshaw!" said his lordship impatiently, "the assertions you make are not proofs—my wife having died insane is no evidence that she was not guilty, and this boy whom Carter had in his charge—who is to prove that he was my son!"

He paused, waiting some reply, but Father O'Connor was silent.

"No," resumed his lordship, "I am not convinced; and if Carter, who is here in the castle by my order, denies the charges brought against him, I shall refuse to credit what I have heard."

The priest ventured to say: "Even, my lord, in the face of the evidence given by the picture about your neck?"

"No, no; I do not mean that; this young woman whom you brought to the castle, and whom I saw, I know to be my daughter"—his voice trembled;—"but I mean regarding the guilt of Marie Dougherty."

"Well, my lord," Father O'Connor said again, "if you rely for your full conviction on a confession from this man, Carter, you will be disappointed—unless some influence can

be exerted which will force him to confess; otherwise, if he finds there are no important proofs against him, he will have effrontery enough to perjure himself."

"And in that case," said Lord Heathcote sharply, "in the case of his refusal to confess, and my refusal to believe, and consequently to acknowledge my offspring, would you still keep my secret—would you retain from this young woman the story of her birth?"

"In justice to her, my lord, I could not do so; she has bitterly sacrificed herself for a man whom she still believes to be her father, as you are already aware from my recent tale, and so devoted is she, that she has not ceased to be anxious about this poor wretch since her arrival in Dublin. No inducement can make her leave him, can cause her to abate any of that self-immolation which she deems to be her duty; would it be just, my lord, to permit this to continue for the sake of sparing your pride?"

"You would then tell her," said the nobleman somewhat bitterly, "that she is the daughter of an English peer?"

"Yes, my lord; but when with that information I must also tell her that the English peer, refusing to credit the testimony which has been given him, refusing to obey the promptings of his own heart, believes his wife, the mother of this girl, to have been a wretched, guilty woman, how much of sweetness will be left in my announcement? Ah! my lord, your daughter would rather have an heirloom of virtue than all your titles and estates."

The nobleman bit his lip, and was silent for a moment; then he said with startling abruptness: "You have not yet told me the name of the boy whom Carter had in charge, nor where he can at present be found."

"Pardon me, my lord, I think I told you at our first interview that he was leading an obscure life among the Irish poor, with no desire save that of performing well his humble duty; *he* will not trouble your lordship."

"But who is he—I would know—give me his name—speak!" And the stern eyes were bent upon the priest.

"Since you *would* know, my lord—I am he."

And Father O'Connor stood with folded arms and bowed head. He made no motion to approach Lord Heathcote—he did not even look at him, but kept his eyes turned to the floor.

"My God! my God!" came from the white lips of the peer; still neither did *he* make any motion to the clergyman; he only continued to look, his gaze growing more wild and thrilling us it traversed every part of the priest's person. "If I could only fully believe," he said, gaspingly; "but it may not have been my son whom Carter had in charge; and yet my heart misgives me that it was; and the resemblance comes out now as I did not notice it before—the profile of the face, the form, are like Walter's—yes, it must be *my* son—my son!"

The thrill of that heart-cry pierced Father O'Connor—with one simultaneous movement the priest and the peer were in each other's arms.

The delay seemed long to the little party which Father O'Connor had left—all the longer because every nerve was strained with hope and expectation; and the excitement and anticipation of the two girls were increased by Dennier's unusually joyous and animated manner. Even Father Meagher had caught the extraordinary eagerness, and he watched with restless longing for one of the doors of the apartment to open and admit some one who would put an end to all this suspense.

At last his wish was gratified; a door opened, and Lord Heathcote, accompanied by Father O'Connor, entered. Both bore traces of recent agitation, but the nobleman had recovered his wonted manner sufficiently to bear himself with his accustomed dignified carriage, and to throw upon all sides of him his old piercing glance: the latter, however, was tempered by a smile which softened his countenance, and imparted to it a singular charm. Dennier immediately approached him.

"Introduce me to these people, Walter," he said quietly; and Dennier, with his own courtly grace now enhanced by the joy which shone so unmistakably in his manner, offered his arm to the nobleman, and conducted him first to Father Meagher. The gray-haired priest returned the kind salutation in his simple, hearty manner, and Clare was next introduced, her heightened color and animated eyes forming a pretty picture as she responded to his lordship's greeting. Nora was next, and to her Lord Heathcote said, as he extended his hand: "We have met before, and I have not forgotten, young lady, the request which you asked of me then."

His manner, even more than his words, seemed to indicate that he had given her plea some favorable reflection; her heart beat high with hope and gratitude, and she could have fallen at his feet and embraced them in the excess of her joy. Her ardent feelings were portrayed in her beautiful face, never more beautiful than at that moment when she stood directly under the rays of the chandelier; and the nobleman, as if suddenly impressed, and struggling with feelings which he could not master, continued to hold her hand and to gaze into her eyes. But he conquered himself at last, and he turned away, saying kindly, and looking from one to the other of the little party:

"I thank you, good people, for obeying so promptly my mysterious summons to you all. Your presence here was necessary to help to prove the innocence of a certain party, and I have adopted this means in order to attain my end. I must crave your patience a little longer, and then all shall be explained to you."

He gave a signal to Dennier; the latter left the room, but returned in a moment, and in a few seconds more—seconds that were like hours to some of the mystified and anxious party—another door opened, and Mortimer Carter was ushered in. With his very first glance of the assemblage he comprehended its purport, and he braced himself to meet it:—throw-

ing about him an unflinching look, he advanced to the nobleman, and with startling firmness made his obeisance.

"Look about you, Mortimer Carter," said Lord Heathcote sternly, "and meet the evidences of your guilt—acknowledge the innocence of Marie Dougherty—confess the crime which despoiled me of my wife, and stigmatized my children!"

"I know not what you mean, my lord!" and Carter drew himself up undauntedly, even defiantly.

Lord Heathcote, despite his efforts to be calm, was growing strangely agitated.

"Restore to me my son, whom you abducted from his home after you had caused his mother to leave him! here is a witness"—with a sweep of his hand indicating Father Meagher—"who can prove where you fled to on the disappearance of my family, and also that you carried with you a boy who corresponded in age to my son."

"Which does not prove, my lord, that it *was* your son,' answered Carter; "and I, knowing my innocence in this matter, shall not take the trouble to show that the boy you speak of is the son of one who was an intimate and dear friend of my own—a Charles O'Connor; the baptismal certificate of the boy has proved his identity long ago. I perceive that you have him present, my lord,"—and he indicated with a most brazen bow Father O'Connor.

The nobleman, to Carter's secret triumph, was evidently disconcerted; a look of bitter disappointment came into his face, but he resumed after a moment's painful silence:

"Will you deny, also, that my daughter lived in your vicinity, within your sight, from her infancy to her womanhood?"

"No, my lord, for that would be a falsehood." The same effrontery marked Carter's manner.

"And you suffered this," resumed Lord Heathcote, "without acquainting me—you knew of her whereabouts and you did not tell me?"

"I forbore to tell you, my lord, for this reason: when I

arrived in Dhrommacohol with the child of my friend, intending to make my home there, I found that strange accident had brought me to the very spot where Marie Dougherty's child had found a home as comfortable as that from which her mother had taken her; but her mother was dead —had died insane, I learned, and her reputed father had disappeared for the time. Your lordship, if you remember, had already told me at our final interview that you wished never to look upon the children of her who had so deeply disgraced you; that her infamy might shroud her and hers; of what use, then, would it be for me to acquaint you with the whereabouts of your child? she was well done for, and so long as a comfortable home was assured to her, it could make little difference to her who was her father; after, when chance threw me in the presence of him who had reported himself to be her father, and I saw the miserable vagabond-beggar he had become, and I knew, also, that he did not seek any longer to claim the child, pity for the unhappy creature—for I saw that he was unhappy—deterred me from endeavoring to bring him to justice—beside, no justice could restore the innocence of her whom he had caused to fall."

Lord Heathcote groaned, and passed his hand wildly across his forehead; but again he quickly recovered himself. "When, in your business of informer," he said with bitter irony, "you met and recognized me in the garrison of Tralee, why did you not speak of these things?"

"Your stern manner to me, my lord, forbade it—I felt that my revelations would but further anger you, since the guilt of your *wife would still remain.*"

There was a taunting emphasis on the last words. Lord Heathcote flushed angrily. "After," he said, "when you became courageous enough to brave my manner"—speaking with stinging sarcasm,—"and you dropped hints of the past in my presence, why did you not speak of these things then?"

"You forget, my lord; you yourself closed my lips by com-

manding me to stop, and to continue to bury within my own breast all that I knew of your history."

"But again," said the nobleman, "when this child, claimed herself by this wretched man, sacrificed herself for him—leaving home, friends, and all that was dearest to her,—why did you not speak then to save her?"

"Because of my desire to save *you*, my lord."

"It is enough!" said the nobleman, and he waved him away.

Carter, with an unflinching look about him, walked triumphantly from the room. Lord Heathcote turned to Dennier, who had not left his side, and said faintly:

"Assist me to another room—I would see you alone; and ask these people to wait a few moments."

Dennier did as he was requested, and the little party were once more left to themselves.

Clare, so wildly expecting to hear favorable tidings regarding her brother, felt her heart sicken with disappointment; perhaps this was all they had been summoned for—to listen to some revelation which for her had no very special interest; for so far, all that she had heard had not caused her a suspicion of the truth, further than to think from the conversation which passed relative to Father O'Connor that his might be a case of mistaken identity. Neither did Nora dream that she was the daughter spoken of, and while she too was disappointed that the nobleman had not as yet made good the promise he had seemed to imply by his remark to herself, hope did not leave her, and she sought to cheer Clare by whispering her own reasons for confidence.

Father Meagher was so bewildered and so agitated by all that he had heard that he could not keep his chair. He paced the room with his hands behind him and his head down—his whole appearance indicating troubled thought. One by one he was linking incidents of the past; going over in minute detail the death of Marie Dougherty, every circumstance that had attended that strange and sad demise; then his

thoughts adverted to the arrival of Carter in Dhrommacohol —Carter having in possession a noble looking little boy,—and succeeding these reflections came others, equally as agitating, on the remarks which had passed relative to Father O'Connor; and then, with still more startling anxiety, his thoughts adverted to all that had been said of the child of the poor dead mother. He looked at Nora; could it be that she was the daughter of whom Lord Heathcote had spoken. Unable to contain himself longer, he hurried to impart his startling conjecture to Father O'Connor, who, absorbed in his own melancholy thoughts, sat with his head so deeply bowed that his chin touched his breast. He never for an instant doubted Rick's story—the earnestness, the truthfulness of the poor creature had been too unmistakable; and he grieved now, not that his father's heart, which had but just opened to him, had closed again because of Carter's miserable falsehood, but because of the sorrow which Carter's wretched lies would bring to other hearts than his own. He looked up at Father Meagher's touch, but at that moment Dennier entered.

What had occurred to so change the young man? his joyful mien had entirely disappeared, and his mouth was compressed as if from intense inward suffering.

"I would see Father O'Connor alone for a moment," he said; "and you, my friends, be patient a little longer."

The two withdrew into one of the adjoining rooms, and there, when the door had closed upon them, Dennier turned abruptly, and faced his companion. All the mysterious longing which on the occasion of their first meeting, six months before, had shone in his eyes, came into them now, and the singular feeling by which he had been actuated then aroused again with renewed force; but now he understood its cause. He extended his arms, and cried:

"William! I have heard the whole story, and I feel that you are my brother."

The young priest needed no second invitation to clasp to his heart one whom he had already learned to esteem and to

like, and long and tender was the embrace which united at last the twin brothers.

"And you are the son of Lord Heathcote who was taken to England in your infancy?" said the priest, when each had released the other.

"Yes;" and then followed from Dennier, or rather Walter Berkeley, a brief account of the strange events in his life. "But I cannot linger," he said abruptly; "I am only here on Lord Heathcote's bidding. He desires you, Walter, to tell the others all, but only on proviso that they pledge themselves to keep it a profound secret. He intends to have another interview to-night with Carter, the result of which will determine our fate—whether we are to be acknowledged as the children of his lordship, or whether we are to lock within our own breasts the story of our birth; should Carter confess, it will be the former; should he persist in denying, Lord Heathcote's stern pride will not allow him to acknowledge to the world that we, the offspring of such a guilty mother, are also his children. Go, William,"—how sweet the name was to the ears of Father O'Connor, or rather Father Berkeley!—"take them back to the hotel and tell them all this—later, I shall join you with the result of the approaching interview with Carter. Now you understand why I kept away from you; I could not trust myself in your presence, and that of Nora, without betraying myself. Tell her so, William, and tell them all—how it was my proposition to bring Carter here and confront him with you all. I suggested to Lord Heathcote that, since we were denied direct proof of the traitor's guilt, perchance a sudden accusation, before those whom he had so cruelly injured, might extort from him an involuntary confession; and Lord Heathcote, who had already given me his entire confidence, revealing phases of his heart which could not but excite my pity, allowed me to manage everything as I would; but so far all has failed."

His lip trembled, and he turned away; in a moment, however, he turned back, and having taken a warm adieu of his

newly-found brother, he departed to seek the nobleman, while Father O'Connor, as we must continue to call him, joined his friends. They returned to the hotel, and there the young priest told the strange, strange story.

"I felt it," said Father Meagher, jumping up with all the alacrity of a young man, and seizing the clergyman's two hands.

"*My brother!*" exclaimed Nora, every vestige of color flown from her face, and her large eyes looking larger and unnatural in the intensity of their wild stare. "Father O'Connor my brother, and Captain Dennier my brother also—surely it is a dream!"

She did not seem to be so impressed by the fact that Lord Heathcote was her father, as that she was the sister of the two young men, and it required Father Meagher's assurances, and Father O'Connor's affectionate reiteration of all that he had told, and Clare's joyfully weeping congratulations, to convince her of her singular relationship.

"Do you swear to these statements?"

It was the interrogatory put by Lord Heathcote to Mortimer Carter, with Dennier as the solitary witness. Not a ruffle appeared in Carter's manner; not a deepening of his florid color, not even an instant's dropping of his eyes, but with all the assurance of well-imitated conscious rectitude, he stood firmly drawn to his full height, and his face expressing a bold triumph as he answered in a distinct, ringing voice:

"I do, my lord, swear most solemnly that all which I repeated to your lordship a short time ago in the presence of those who were there assembled is most assuredly and unqualifiedly true."

"Allow me to remind your lordship," interposed Dennier, "that the oath of a traitor is of little worth—this man must have already perjured himself many times in the despicable service in which he has been engaged, so that it required little effort for him to take a false oath now."

Carter affected to bear in silence the scathing imputation, waiting respectfully for Lord Heathcote to speak. His lordship said quietly, after he had turned over nervously some papers on the open cabinet before him:

"You have expected, I believe, as your reward for recent information a sum of money sufficient, if I mistake not, to purchase the estate of the prisoner, Carroll O'Donoghue?"

"I have had your own assurance of it, my lord," answered Carter, his eyes beginning to sparkle.

"Well, Mr. Carter,"—the nobleman arose, and placing his hands with a careless gesture behind him, bent his sternest look upon the miscreant,—"perhaps you are already aware that her gracious Majesty, the Queen, has pardoned recently some of these Fenians?"

He spoke very slowly, as if he would give his listener ample time to comprehend:

"Feeling grateful for the care which was given to my children by this O'Donoghue family, I have interested myself in behalf of the doomed prisoner; the result of my efforts reached me to-day—it is an entire pardon of Carroll O'Donoghue, and an order that his estate be purchased and restored to him."

The florid color of Carter's face changed to purple, becoming so deep that it threatened to end in an alarming blackness; the veins in his forehead and neck swelled—he was obliged to loosen his collar to give himself air.

"My lord," he gasped, "you do not mean that I am to lose my reward—I toiled for it night and day!"

"I regret, Mr. Carter," said the nobleman ironically, "that you are so little the Christian as to desire your reward at the expense of a fellow-creature's life—so diabolical a spirit would indicate deliberate error in the matter of your sworn statements."

Carter bit his lip until the blood came in his effort to repress his baffled rage. "Am I, then, to have no reward for my work in behalf of the government, my lord?" he asked, his voice husky and trembling.

Lord Heathcote answered quietly: "None, Mr. Carter, save the testimony of your own conscience."

He touched the bell; an attendant entered, and baffled, discomfited, humbled Carter was obliged to leave the room without uttering another remonstrance.

The nobleman turned to Dennier, the anguish which he had striven to repress showing so painfully in his face that the young man could not bear to look at it. "Walter," he said, speaking with difficulty, "I shall do every justice to you all save that of making any public acknowledgment—my wealth shall be at your disposal; it will enable Marie to bring a dower to him to whom she has already given her heart; it will place within your reach affluence for the lady you would wed; and it will give to this young priest, to whom my heart yearns, though I cannot yet entirely believe that he is my son, enough to enable him to dispense his charities. For myself, my failing health has made me think for some time of resigning my onerous position—I shall now do so, and returning to England, I shall bury, in a life of quiet and retirement, this heart which has sustained so many shocks."

"Father!" The young man knelt beside him:—"Since your own voluntary act will give to her I would wed the protection of her brother and her home again, I ask no more. I shall devote my life to you, and my brother and sister will, I doubt not——"

"Cease!" interrupted the nobleman, with something of his olden sternness. "You do not understand me, Walter,"—his voice softening. "I shall go away without seeing again those who remind me of that unhappy, that guilty past. I shall bury myself in a solitude which they must not disturb. If you,—the sole one whom Marie left to me when she took her guilty flight,—if you choose to cheer my declining years,—I feel they will be few—I shall accept the sacrifice; understand, I place no restriction upon as much of the tale being told as may be necessary to make people know that my daughter is not the child of the degraded man who claims her as such. I only ask that my name be spared!"

"Do not fear, father," answered the young man somewhat bitterly; "in the pain which must result from the thought of the guilt which you still believe adheres to our mother, there will be little disposition to mention your name."

"Well, go now," said the nobleman wearily,—"you say that you promised to join your friends—and come to me in the morning. I shall leave for London to-morrow."

Dennier took a hasty adieu, and hurried to the hotel, where his friends so impatiently awaited him.

What a greeting was his—what a welcoming upon every side! and as he stood, one arm encircling Nora, the other hand clasped tightly in both of Father O'Connor's, and directly in front of him Father Meagher and Clare, and the whole party too excited, and too wildly joyful to do more than look at each other and give vent to their feelings by incoherent exclamations, he also gave himself, for the moment, entirely up to that unrestrained joy. He would not tell them yet of the sadness which oppressed his own heart—instead, he would whisper first into Clare's ear the story of her brother's pardon, and the restoration of his property. She repeated aloud the delightful tidings, and then, while joyous excitement again reigned, she seized his hands and cried her grateful tears upon them. He could not restrain the impulse to stoop and whisper:

"Have I made amends for all the past, Miss O'Donoghue?"

"Captain Dennier—Mr. Berkeley, I mean,—how can you ask?" and her beautiful eyes turned upon him with a look which thrilled him.

At length Dennier's communication was entirely made—Lord Heathcote's determination and his own resolution. To leave them—to go back to England! not even to accompany them on their return to Tralee in order to congratulate Carroll on his wonderful good fortune! How Clare paled and quivered! and then for the first time he read the reciprocation of his passion. He extended his hand while he ventured to whisper:

"Clare—I may call you so this once—you will sometimes think of me—you will pray for me—you will hope with me that one day Heaven itself will interpose to rend this veil before my father's eyes, and that——"

She broke from him to conceal her painful blushes, but he had read more than enough to convince him of a very blissful fact.

He bade them all adieu, confiding his newly-found relatives to each other's care; and promising to write speedily, he tore himself away, hurrying to the quarters of Captain Crawford, though it was long past midnight.

CHAPTER LVII.

THE RETURN TO DHROMMACOHOL.

NEVER was there a more exultant heart than that of Tighe a Vohr when he learned of Carroll's pardon; it was only his respect for Father Meagher, the relator of the good tidings, which prevented him from throwing his *caubeen* up to the ceiling of the hotel parlor, and shouting aloud; as it was, his body squirmed with contortions expressive of his efforts to contain his joy, and the moment he found himself below stairs in the servants' quarters his comical gyrations, and the tricks through which he put Shaun, relieved his overcharged heart and convulsed the domestics with laughter. He had one anxiety, however: how should he ever wait the return to Tralee to be assured by the evidence of his own eyes that his young master was once more free. The party, however, were already preparing for their return, and in a few hours all were once more on their whirling journey.

On their arrival at Tralee they found Carroll's release still delayed by some preliminaries required by the law, but a couple of days sufficed for all arrangements, and Carroll O'Donoghue, pale, emaciated, but a free man at last, was in the midst of his friends. No eye could remain dry, no heart without a wild palpitation, as they looked into his dear face, and felt that he had been rescued from the jaws of death itself. They would not wait to tell him, there in the private apartment of the governor of the prison, the wonderful circumstances which had brought about his release, but in a private parlor of "Blenner's," whither they were immediately driven from the prison, and over a repast of which all were too excited to partake, the wonderful, wonderful story was told to Carroll.

"And so my lady-love," he said playfully to Nora, or Marie, as she was now called by her friends, "turns out to be a real lady after all—the daughter of a nobleman! why, it is like one of the romances we used to read in our childhood."

Nora blushed, and was silent.

There was one cloud, however, on the happiness of the little party—the absence of Dennier, or Walter Berkeley, as they all now called the young ex-officer. Carroll so yearned to welcome him, and even Tighe a Vohr, who had been favored with an embrace from his young master as warm as any the latter had bestowed, wondered to himself why the Englishman kept away at this time, when he was so attentive to the little party before they started on that mysterious journey to Dublin. And in the visit that he contrived to make to Corny O'Toole, before they all started for Dhrommacohol, when he had given Corny a graphic account of as much as he knew of the wonderful events which had happened, he concluded by saying:

"You see, Corny, the comfortable misgivin' I had about somethin' good comin' out o' all thim quare journeys to Dublin that Father O'Connor an' Father Meagher wor makin', wasn't far wrong. It's all roight now, an' if only Captain Dennier, or Mr. Berkeley, as they tould me his name was now, was here, I'd be quite contint; but somehow I don't loike to see him away from Miss O'Donoghue at this perticler toime —how an' iver, it's all roight, or mebbe it'll come all roight whin the twists an' the knots that's always in thrue love is taken out. An' now, Corny, we're all off for Dhrommacohol this viry evenin', an' I won't forgit to thry an' do me part for you—an' do you hould yersel' in readiness to come on to us as soon as I sind you word; for jist as shpeedy as I foind me mother in the roight koind o' humor to recave the offer o' yer heart an' hand, I'll aythur come mesel', or I'll foind some manes o' sindin you word."

"Thank you, Mr. Carmody, thank you!" and the little man was radiant with smiles.

Moira Moynahan was hardly prepared for the influx of visitors which came so suddenly to the little pastoral residence; but the fact that Tighe accompanied them, and the still more joyful fact of being permitted to hear all about it from Tighe's own lips, while the remainder of the party repaired to the study, or to the parlor, put her into excellent humor.

What thoughts filled Carroll's mind as he stood once more in the house in which his last arrest had taken place—what burning admiration and love for her whose noble sacrifice of self had really been the cause of his release! he turned to her:

"Marie!"

Accustomed as he had been to Nora, singularly enough this newer name came to him with little effort to remember it.

"A life of devotion to you, as I shall strive to make my future, will be far too little to show my gratitude, my love!"

A troubled look came into her eyes, though she smiled faintly; and without answering him, she found some pretext to leave him, and at length to steal to her old favorite haunt, the chapel. There, with her face uplifted to the tabernacle, she prayed:

"Oh, my God! I thank Thee—Thou hast well rewarded the little I have done; and now, I pledge myself to do Thy work, to serve Thy poor, to wait upon Thy sick, to deny myself!" She rose when her prayer was finished, and rejoined her friends.

It still required some little time before the ancient home of the O'Donoghues would return to the possession of its heir; but Carroll, knowing it would certainly return to him, was well content to wait—passing delightful hours in rambling over the old grounds, planning improvements, and greeting old friends. All Dhrommacohol was aroused by the story of his wonderful release, and the still more marvelous tale of Nora McCarthy not being even Nora Sullivan, but having to

change her name a second time to Marie Berkeley; Clare, as happy and as eager as himself, always accompanied him, but Marie sought for pretexts to decline joining in the rambles. At first Carroll laughed at the work which she alleged as her excuse, then he became a little annoyed, and at last, on the fifth day of their sojourn in the pastoral residence, he deliberately stood in the doorway of a room which Marie was about to enter, and said reproachfully:

"Now, Marie, this is positively cruel of you! why, if you treat me so unlover-like now, what will be your manner when, on the restoration of our home, I dare propose for a right to your obedience? perhaps, however," he continued in a playful tone, "it is because my lineage does not compare with your own—you, you know, are the daughter of a peer!"

She looked at him with gentle reproach, but, before he could answer, Father Meagher's voice was calling to them both from the foot of the stair. They hurried down to find themselves face to face with Rick of the Hills. Yes, there he was, but so wasted by disease that he seemed like the ghost of his former self; his face, however, had no longer its wild, unhappy expression; haggard and worn though it was, there was a peace, and even joy upon it, which told of quiet and happiness within. Beside him was a pale and delicate, but remarkably pretty, young woman—a charming modesty marked her mien, and the taste and simplicity of her dress gave evidence of no ordinary mind. She was in turn accompanied by an elderly female dressed in deep mourning, and on the other side of Rick was a beautiful boy—but his beauty, exquisite though it was, was also saddening by the evidence it gave of early decay—the hectic color, the lustrous eyes, the marble brow, all told of fast approaching dissolution.

Clare was already in the room, standing near the young woman, and on the entrance of Carroll and Marie, Rick trembled so violently that he could scarcely stand.

"You have nothing to fear, Rick," said the priest re-assuringly; "you have been forgiven everything. Here,"—ap

proaching the young woman, and leading her forward—"is Rick's true daughter, *Cathleen*. And here"—drawing forward also the elderly lady—"is the good woman who has proved a true mother to Cathleen. And here"—crossing to the boy, and taking him by the hand—"is the little lad of whom Father O'Connor gave us so touching an account. Now, Rick, tell us why you did not reach Dublin in time to be present at the interview we all had with Lord Heathcote?"

The poor fellow, weak as he seemed to be, would have stood to tell his story; but Father Meagher forced him into his chair; and he dispatched Moira, whose curiosity had made her thrust her head in at the door, for a drink which should revive the feeble man.

"Why, do you see," he began, "the shock of what I told Cathleen, together with my own wild feelings—for I couldn't contain myself at all when I saw in her face that same look that had never left my heart since she was taken from me,—prostrated her entirely; and when she recovered enough to weigh well all that I told her, and to look into the proofs that I brought her of my strange story, and to listen to the promptings of her own heart, which forced her to believe me, it left her so weak—though at the same time happy—that for some days there was even danger of her death. The letter, which told me to come immediately to Dublin, arrived at that time; I could not leave my darling then, when there was likelihood of God himself taking her from me, and I waited, praying to have her restored; she was restored, and with her first return of strength, learning of the letter which had come to me, she insisted on bearing me company. Although she is present, I may tell you what she said.

"'Father, let me go with you; let me beg forgiveness for you from her whom you caused to make such a bitter sacrifice!'

"So we all came—the good woman, who would not be parted from Cathleen, and the boy, Bartley Donovan, who

would not remain after us—and we reached Dublin, to find nobody there who wanted us; we came on then to Dhrommacohol, and before we got as far as this we heard everybody full of Mr. O'Donoghue's release, and the rumor that his estate was to be restored to him, and how Miss McCarthy, that was, was no longer even the daughter of Rick of the Hills, but a Miss Berkeley; though the people, who thought they knew so much, did not seem to know any more than just these bare facts. They were enough, however, to tell me that justice had been done, and I came here with a lighter heart; and now"—he would rise and face them all,—"I have a few explanations to make for my own peace of mind: I'll not dwell on the influence that Carter had upon me—I'll not tire you with telling of the remorse which tormented my conscience through all that dreadful time—perhaps Father O'Connor has told you a little of it—but I *must* say this: Father Meagher"—he turned more immediately to the priest,—"when I sought to excuse my claiming of Miss McCarthy as my daughter by saying that it was the love for my child which drove me to it, and when I, seeing you touched and won by my plea, made it the stronger and wilder, it was not a lie—I told you no falsehood—for it was of Cathleen I thought; it was of my love for Cathleen that I spoke. And afterward, not to be guilty in the sight of Heaven of allowing a touch of her pure hands upon me, she herself can tell you how I commanded her never to rest even her fingers upon my arm. God, however, had his own blessed way of rewarding her goodness. Her devotion to me, her kindness, even when I read loathing and horror in her eyes, were breaking my heart; her efforts to reform me so touched my soul that many a time, when nothing else would stop me, the thought of her face, the memory of her words, kept me from drowning my misery in drink. And at last, when Father O'Connor came to us, when he said to me at parting such strange words that they seemed as if he had read my heart, I took desperate courage and determined to fling off my burden; there was little use in wait-

ing longer for Carter to redeem his word, and restore to me Cathleen; my heart misgave me that Cathleen was dead, and that Carter would not tell me, knowing that in that case his chief influence over me would be destroyed. I went to Father O'Connor, and you know the result. I feel now that my days are numbered; but my peace is made with God, and when all of you, whom I have so cruelly injured, assure me that you forgive me, I have nothing more to ask."

He turned to Marie, and before she could prevent him, he was kneeling at her feet.

Everybody was crying: even Father Meagher, though he sought to conceal his emotion by shaking his head and pretending that the use of his handkerchief was only to remove the perspiration. Carroll O'Donoghue, who stood beside Marie, instantly stooped with her to raise the suppliant.

"Dear Rick," said Marie softly, "my part, my sacrifice, have been little compared with your noble repentance!"

A smile of ineffable joy broke over his face, and motioning to Cathleen to draw near, he put her hand in that of Marie, saying to the latter: "May I ask you to be her friend?"

Marie's answer was a warm embrace of the young fragile girl.

Tighe a Vohr had heard from Moira something of the strange scene in the parlor; she had contrived to remain when she returned with the drink which her uncle had ordered for Rick, but which the latter had forgotten to take, though it had been placed beside him. And Tighe, when he had heard sufficient from the priest's niece to know that Rick was craving forgiveness, ventured himself to the parlor door and asked permission to add a little to Rick's statement. The permission was willingly given, and then, in his own peculiar, but none the less interesting manner, he told of the way in which Rick had intercepted Carter's plan for Carroll's mock release.

"I tould you I'd not forgit that good turn," he said, as a sort of explanation to Rick, "an' I think I can shwear that the young masther'll not forgit it aythur."

"Indeed you can, Tighe!" And Carroll O'Donoghue was again supporting Rick, and warmly shaking his hand. "You shall live with me, Rick," he said; "your home, your happy home, with Cathleen at its head, shall be upon our estate, and neither you nor yours shall ever want for anything again."

"Surely, God is too good!" murmured the poor fellow, looking about him with eyes swimming in grateful tears.

All were to dine in the little pastoral residence, and Clare, when the joyful excitement was somewhat subdued, stole into the kitchen to assist Moira. Nora would have followed, but Carroll intercepted her, insisting that she should repair to the study to listen to some communication from him. She entered reluctantly, and he, closing the door, leaned against it with folded arms.

"Now, Marie, I insist upon a straightforward answer. We have both gone through too much to trifle with our happiness longer. In a fortnight work will begin upon the estate, and the dear old home will be speedily renovated. When that is done, will you become my wife?"

She did not speak; instead, her bosom heaved, and her eyes filled with tears.

"Answer me, Marie!" he said in an alarmed tone. "Surely there is nothing now to prevent?"

She answered slowly: "I would not have your wife one who is stained with the disgrace of her mother."

"Is that all?" he exclaimed joyfully. "Marie, did you think this heart of mine could give you up for anything in the world? it is *you* I want—*you*, as you are, with your own pure heart and noble mind, regardless of what those may have been from whom you have sprung; further, I deem the innocence of your mother to be firmly established. Are you satisfied?"

"Yes,"—placing her hands voluntarily in his—"but I have a request to make."

"Speak, dearest; it is granted before you utter it."

"That you defer our wedding."

His face fell; he had not dreamed that such was to be the purport of her boon.

"There is no need for haste," she said; "wait, and busy yourself with the improvements you have planned on the estate. I have a hope that something will happen to convince Lord Heathcote of my mother's innocence, and I would bring to the altar with you a name as unstained as your own is."

It was useless for him to remonstrate or entreat; the utmost to which she would yield was not to delay the wedding longer than a year.

"And in the meantime," he asked, "what will you do?"

"Continue to live here with Father Meagher and Moira; I thought of going to Father O'Connor, now that he is really my brother, you know"—speaking playfully,—"but his reverence, in answer to the letter which I wrote him to that effect, disapproves of the plan—he says it is better to let his parishioners remain ignorant of his changed identity, especially as Lord Heathcote could not be quite convinced that he was his son. So, as I could not go to him known as his sister, why, I shall remain as I am, and he will be still plain, humble Father O'Connor."

Carroll shook his head. "Clare and I shall remove to the old home as soon as it is prepared, and your home shall be with us, as it always has been."

"No, no, Carroll, you must let me have my own way in this matter; and after, when Providence deigns to permit our union, I shall be as obedient as even you can wish me to be."

He was forced to be satisfied.

That very afternoon Carroll, accompanied by Father Meagher, sought for a cottage which might form a temporary home for Rick and his family; and one was secured not a great distance from the little pastoral residence. Thither, after an interval of two days, during which Carroll had it repaired and neatly furnished, the little family removed.

Sullivan had grown alarmingly weak, even more so when he learned from Father Meagher—the latter being obliged to

tell him because of Rick's own earnest questions—that, had he reached Dublin in time to give *his* evidence to Lord Heathcote, the latter might have been convinced of the innocence of his wife.

"I shall endeavor to get to London," he said. "I shall compel his lordship to believe me."

But the priest well knew that his journey would be sooner to the bourne beyond the grave than the one he contemplated. And so it proved to be. From the moment he entered the pretty little cottage he was scarcely able to leave his bed; everybody vied with Cathleen in ministering to him—even the neighbors, who could not cease to wonder at the strange fact of Rick's new daughter, as they called Cathleen; but, next to Cathleen's own tender hand, Rick liked to have Tighe a Vohr about him; the simple fellow, gentle and kind as a woman, had won the poor sick man's heart, and to Tighe, when Rick's strength would permit, he loved to talk of all the recent strange events, and to deplore his absence from Dublin at a time when his evidence might have done so much. In that way Tighe learned all about Lord Heathcote's refusal to make any public acknowledgment of his children, owing to Carter's denial of his guilt of the past, and with his natural shrewdness, he divined the cause of Dennier's (or Berkeley's) absence, and on the day on which he was thus enlightened by his reflections, he vented his feelings to Shaun, when the two were out on the country road:

"So, it's that ould baste o' a Carther that's the manes o' kapin' Miss O'Donoghue an' that noble-hearted Englishman apart!—it's a wondher the loightnin' o' Heaven doesn't sthrike the ould vagabone an' make him confiss! How an' iver, it's a long lane that has no turn, an' mark me words for it, Shaun, but he'll be ketched in a noose o' his own makin' yet!"

CHAPTER LVIII.

COVICTED AT LAST.

CARTER was in his old room in Tralee, a bottle and glass on the table before which he sat, and his bloated face and blood-shot eyes betraying how deep had been his potation.

"They thought to snare me," he muttered, again half-filling his glass, and draining its contents, "but I carried the day by my courage. It's a wonder they didn't have Rick of the Hills to face me—and if they did, it would have been the same, for I'd pretend to put the lies down his throat. They snatched the game from me—they foiled me of my revenge—but I'll give them a parting blow before I leave! I'll wait awhile yet, and I'll set another watch on Dhrommacohand may be I'll find some opportunity of abducting that pretty Marie, and if I don't, I'll put a bullet through Carroll O'Donoghue's heart—that will give his dainty affianced a life-long grief. It is time Thade was here,"—looking at his watch; and then he helped himself to another glass of the liquor. At that instant there was a knock at the door, and before Carter could respond, Thade entered. "Well, will you be ready to start this evening?" said Carter.

"Aye," answered Thade.

"And mind you do your business better than you did it before—sending me reports that everything was quiet, and the pastor of the parish at that very time thinking of starting for Dublin!"

"Well, how was I to know that?" said Thade surlily; "didn't I watch, an' as soon as I saw himsel' an' Miss O'Donoghue, an' Tighe a Vohr follyin' thim, didn't I write to tell you so? but you were away whin the letther came, an' I,

wondherin' that you gev me no answer, naythur to that nor to another that I sint, came up here mesel', to foind that you had gone to Dublin. It's you that had a roight to sind me word, an' not be kapin' me in the loike o' that suspinse!"

"Well, I suppose I had," said Carter, considerably mollified; "but I didn't expect to be gone long, and I wouldn't have been, either, only they showed me such attention in Dublin Castle, telling me that Lord Heathcote was too ill to see me for a few days, but that he wished everything to be done for my comfort."

"Faix, Mr. Carther, but you must be a great man intoirely to be recaved at Dublin Castle that way!"

"May be I am, Thade; and may be, if you serve me well, there's no knowing what I'll do for you."

"The divil a fear o' me, Mr. Carther; I'll sarve you as if you were me own brother!"

"Very well, then, Thade; and here are the funds you will need"—counting out a couple of pound notes; "and help yourself to a drink before we part."

Thade, with every sign of delight, obeyed the invitation, drinking to Carter's health and success, and at length, having safely put away his money, he departed.

Every day or two Carter received plainly-written, but badly-spelled letters, and for a fortnight after Thade's departure they contained no news further than that Mr. O'Donoghue and his sister, with the young lady now known throughout Dhrommacohol as Miss Berkeley, were residing with Father Meagher; that improvements were being made rapidly on the O'Donoghue estate, and while everybody seemed to be anticipating the speedy marriage of Mr. O'Donoghue and Miss Berkeley, no one seemed to know the precise date of the expected event; the letters also stated how Rick of the Hills, in a dying condition, lived in a cottage near the pastoral residence, with a young woman said to be his daughter. And Carter read the missives again and again, and said to himself:

"I'll wait awhile longer; I'll wait until the full tide of hap-

piness sets in upon them—until both of their hearts are bursting with joy—and then I'll strike!" He ground his teeth with savage feeling.

One day a letter came to him stating that Carroll O'Donoghue and his sister had gone to reside in their old home, and that Miss Berkeley did not accompany them—that it was even reported how her marriage had been postponed for a year, for some unknown reason, and that she would continue to live in the pastoral residence.

"Now is my time!" said Carter glowingly, and that evening saw him on his way to Dhrommacohol.

Rick of the Hills was dying; about his bed were gathered all those he so loved to see—Cathleen, his own tender Cathleen, on one side of him, Marie on the other; Clare, with affectionate Bartley, and Mrs. Kelly, the good woman whom Rick loved for her kindness to his child, and Carroll, and Tighe, all kneeling about his bed. Father Meagher, who had already administered the last rites, stood close to the dying man, often replacing the crucifix which fell from his clammy hand. He was perfectly conscious, and he turned to them frequently with such an exquisite smile that it seemed to transfigure his countenance, murmuring: "It is so sweet to be forgiven!"

But his lips closed at last to open no more, and the cold dew of death, and the ashen color of his face, proclaimed that his soul had fled. Then Cathleen's wild grief burst forth:

"My poor, penitent father!" she said, throwing herself upon his body, and pressing to her own the clammy face.

Brief as the time was during which she had known him, she had discovered all the depths of that touching love for herself; and his gentleness and patience during his illness, together with his contrition for the past, which was so constant and so sincere, had won all the affection of her gentle nature.

They would not leave her, and as she could not be persuaded to be removed from the lifeless body, it was decided that all should remain in the little cottage until morning—it was now an hour past midnight; and Tighe volunteered to go on any immediate errands which might be required.

Two stalwart neighbors, who had kindly remained in an adjoining room waiting for the final scene, proffered to accompany him, and the three departed. As they neared Father Meagher's residence, which lay in their immediate direction, and the moon emerging from a cloud distinctly revealed objects for a moment, Tighe fancied he saw the shadow of a man loom up against the wall of the house. He knew that Moira and his mother, who came on certain days to help the priest's niece, and at such times generally remained all night, were the sole occupants of the little domicile, and his heart beat wildly at the thought of danger to them.

"Hist!" he said to his companions, who declared that they also had seen the shadow; "do ache o' you take a soide o' the house an' watch; I shall take the shpot where I thought I saw the man."

All were armed with good stout sticks, and they separated, each walking as guardedly as possible. It was quite dark again—not an object could be discerned; and with his ears strained, and with every nerve drawn to its utmost tension, Tighe waited. A long time elapsed—so long a time that Tighe began to think he was mistaken; and just as he had determined to end his suspense by rapping up Moira and his mother, a window just above his head was raised gently, and a voice called softly:

"Hist! she's not here—she's not in the house."

No answer being returned, the voice repeated its call, and even whistled—a low, shrill, peculiar whistle. But again, no answer being returned, Tighe heard the window closed.

Fearing now to rap up Moira and his mother, lest, while responding to his summons, they might encounter the robber which Tighe deemed the owner of the voice to be, he waited with wildly beating heart and trembling limbs for further developments. The developments came in a few moments, in the bold opening of the front door by the supposed robber, and in the same instant a man started up from the side of the house, against which he had been crouched. The moon, par-

tially emerged from a cloud, just revealed the outlines of his form, and Tighe, calling to his companions, grappled with the man in the doorway. He was opposed by monster strength; both fell, desperately clinched, and rolled down the little stoop, and out on the walk. Tighe heard his companions scuffling with some one else, and his collar was caught in so tight a grasp by his antagonist that he could not shout for aid. At length his adversary seemed to gain the mastery; with one stunning blow at Tighe, he freed himself and ran at full speed. The moon was once more fully out, and it revealed his flying figure.

"After him!" shrieked Tighe, whose stunned faculties recovered in an instant, and picking himself up, and waiting only to divest himself of his coat, he took up the chase.

On they went, pursued and pursuer,—the moon fortunately not entirely disappearing—down the village street, on to the country road; then, making a turn, they continued to dash on to where a steep, rugged descent led to a deep hollow filled with bowlders, through which a stream of water meandered at certain seasons of the year. Would the robber keep on to that—did he know his danger? or would he stop himself in time? No; on he went, and just as the moon came brilliantly out, now sailing in an unclouded sky, he disappeared with a wild cry over the descent. Tighe, horrified, stood on the summit and looked below. He saw the man lying helpless among the stones, and he shut his ears to the fearful cries and groans which reached him. Knowing that he would be unable to render assistance alone, he hurried back. His companions had made a capture, and Moira and Mrs. Carmody, who had been aroused and were sadly frightened, now encircled Tighe for an explanation.

"Some o' you come wid me," he said; "he's killed intoirely, I'm afeered—he fell into the glen, an' his cries are ringin' in me ears!"

It was decided that the prisoner, who was surly and who refused to open his mouth, be left in charge of one of the

stalwart young men, while the other accompanied Tighe and Mrs. Carmody, and Moira volunteered to go and tell Father Meagher.

"An' if he's so badly hurt that he won't bear much movin', where'll we take him?" said Tighe? "Oh, I have it; I'll take him into our house, mother—it's only a little piece beyant where he's lyin'."

All departed on their various errands.

"Aisy; even if he is a robber, he has a sowl," said Tighe, as his companion and himself, having scrambled down the descent, were about lifting the writhing, groaning form.

It was that of a large, heavy man, and having fallen head foremost, the face was downward. They lifted him carefully and turned his face to the moonlight. It was Mortimer Carter. Tighe, in his surprise, well-nigh ceased his hold.

"Well, you ould sinner," he said, as soon as he recovered from his astonishment sufficiently to speak; "you've got yer desarts at last, an' it's a wondher Almighty God didn't shtrike you afore!"

They tried in vain to bear him from the glen—the ascent was too steep; and though Tighe had felt confident of being able to do so, he found now that with every effort he made he but incurred the danger of all three being precipitated backward. So Carter was placed gently upon the stones again, his head lying in Tighe's lap, while Tighe's companion went to arouse some of the people who lived near, in order to get more effectual assistance.

Carter was dreadfully injured; his arm and one of his legs seemed broken, and his face was a frightful mass of blood and bruises, beside some internal injury which caused a groan with every breath.

"Mebbe now you'll confiss all the wrong that you done to Lord Heathcote," Tighe could not refrain from saying, "now, when there's no hope for you; for if you do get over this, which isn't loikely, seein' the luk o' you this minit, you'll be thranspoorted for the way you broke into the praste's house."

"Transported!" said Carter, faintly, and striving to look up into the face above him.

"Yis; what else would it be," said Tighe, "wid all the proof that's agin you? mesel' an' the two min that were wid me saw the whole o' it, an' the villain that was wid you is taken—he's a prisoner this minit, an' willin' enough, I guiss, to tell all he knows."

Tighe was not so sure of the truth of his last words, but, with his usual cunning, he hazarded the remark. A deeper groan than any he had yet given issued from Carter, and a worse agony than that caused by his physical pain distorted his features.

"Will nothing save me?" he gasped.

"Yis," said Tighe, fairly trembling with the hope which filled him, "if you will confiss the guilt that you denied in Lord Heathcote's prisince, I'll ingage that Father Meagher'll not prosecute you for this."

"I will confess," gasped Carter, "tell Father Meagher I will!" and then, from the combined effects of pain and exhaustion, he fainted.

"Oh, blissed mother av God, kape him aloive—don't let him die till he sets matthers roight!" prayed Tighe, while he kept an agonized watch on the top of the descent for a glimpse of the aid he expected.

They came at last—a perfect array of the neighbors, and in a little while, by the help of ropes, a chair, and sturdy hands, the still insensible Carter was borne up, and carried to Mrs. Carmody's residence, where Father Meagher had just arrived. A physician was summoned, but, before he came, Carter had recovered sufficient consciousness to know the clergyman. The latter had been told by Tighe of the promises which had been made by himself and the injured man.

"Will you prosecute me for this act," said Carter, wildly, his very agony giving him strength for the moment, "if I confess the crimes I have committed?"

"Confess your crimes for the sake of your poor soul, Mor-

timer Carter," was the priest's answer; "seek the pardon of your offended God while there is yet time."

"God—pardon—there is none for me!" shrieked the agonized wretch.

"There is," whispered the clergyman, "even at this late moment, if you are sorry for the past, and will make what atonement may be in your power."

"No, no," screamed the despairing man, "there is only hell's fire for my soul; see, see Marie Dougherty! the young wife that I tore from her home, that I slandered to her husband—she taunts me—she curses me! Oh God! I am damned—damned!"

It was horrible to look at him; horrible to listen to his ravings. He tore away the bandages which charitable hands had put upon his wounds, and the blood spurted forth, causing him to shriek and blaspheme at the sight.

The doctor now arrived, and he at once pronounced the case hopeless. The size of the man had rendered his internal injuries fatal, and a few hours at most would end his wretched life.

"Die!" he said, when Father Meagher whispered his danger in his ear, and besought him to prepare for his end: "who says that I shall die?"

He would have forced himself erect in the bed, but they held him down.

"I tell you I have years of life before me, only do not prosecute me—tell me, Father Meagher, that you will not!" and he tried to clutch the priest, who was standing by his bedside.

The clergyman whispered that he would not, and the dying man became quieter, during which time Father Meagher seized the opportunity to say:

"Carter, are you willing to do justice to those you have wronged? will you state now, in the presence of witnesses, that Marie Dougherty was innocent of all that you said of her? that the story which Rick of the Hills told of your crimes is all true?"

"Yes, yes!" was the faint response.

"Will you let me take down, from your lips, such facts as may be required to convince Lord Heathcote of the innocence of his wife; and will you swear to them in the presence of the witnesses I shall call?"

"I will."

All were summoned within the room—Carroll, who had now arrived, Tighe a Vohr, his mother and two of the neighbors who had been foremost in helping the injured man, and Father Meagher, rapidly jotting down the brief facts which were necessary to convince Lord Heathcote; Carter was assisted to rise, and his feeble hand was guided while he affixed his dying mark to the paper; then were appended the signatures of the witnesses. After that he sunk into a fevered slumber. Father Meagher, with crucifix in hand, knelt beside him, striving with Heaven that contrition might be vouchsafed this wretched soul. He woke to know the priest for an instant, then to glare at him with eyes whose look the clergyman never forgot, and to give such an unearthly scream that every one within reach of the sound was startled, and then, with one wild gasp, to die—unshriven, unrepentant, the soul of Mortimer Carter had gone to its Maker.

CHAPTER LIX.

A HAPPY RESTORATION.

THE two funerals took place on the same day; but while Rick of the Hills was followed to the grave by sincerely mourning hearts, Mortimer Carter was laid in the ground without a regret being passed above his coffin, and with only the prayer said over his remains that charity prompted. The money for which he had toiled and schemed, for which he had sacrificed his soul, having no one to claim it, reverted to that government whose spy and informer he had been.

His accomplice in the surreptitious entrance to Father Meagher's house, who was no other than Thade, Carter's paid spy, being told of Carter's death, and hoping to obtain some mitigation of the punishment due to his own crime, made a frank confession. On that night which had resulted so disastrously for Carter, the latter, not knowing that Marie had gone to the home of Rick of the Hills, to be absent until morning, had stolen after midnight to the pastoral residence, and noiselessly cutting a pane from one of the kitchen windows, the blinds of which Moira habitually kept unfastened, he had found it easy to insert his hand and loosen the clasp which held the window down; that done, he had raised the sash and entered the kitchen, while his companion waited without. His purpose had been to drug every sleeper that he found in the house, and then, with the insensible form of Marie in his arms, to walk boldly out of the front door, which he, being within, would have little difficulty in opening. He intended to have borne her to a vehicle that, in the charge of another hired accomplice, waited a little distance up the road, and the driver of which, at the first sound of Tighe's voice

calling to his companions, had whipped up his horse and escaped; Thade gave his name and description, but the officers of the law were unable to find him.

Thade's punishment was mitigated through the merciful interposition of Father Meagher, and the fellow in his gratitude promised with apparent sincerity to reform his evil ways.

Father O'Connor was summoned to Dhrommacohol, and just as he had heard a full account of Carter's death a letter came from Walter Berkeley, he who had been so well known as Captain Dennier. The letter contained an alarming account of Lord Heathcote's failing health, and Father Meagher, perceiving Marie's eyes fill with tears, and Father O'Connor look troubled, said, with his hand on the young priest's shoulder:

"Charlie—forgive me—William, it is but just that you all, father and children, should meet once more; you and Marie be yourselves the bearers to his lordship of this paper signed by Carter; I shall telegraph to the Bishop for leave of absence for you, and Father McShane will go down to your place until his grace sends a substitute."

Marie hailed the proposition with frantic delight; the young priest, with some misgiving as to whether it was quite his duty to leave his beloved parish for the sake of visiting a parent who had even doubted the evidence of his own heart; and Carroll looked with blank dismay at the prospect of a separation from his affianced, short though it might be; he would have accompanied her, but Father Meagher said quietly:

"No, Carroll; this affair comprises a time and a place upon which you must not intrude—Lord Heathcote's family must be alone until this dreadful business is finished."

So the brother and sister departed, first telegraphing the time of their start from Dhrommacohol, and that they bore important news. What was their surprise, on their arrival in London, to be met by a servant in livery who mentioned their

names, asking respectfully if he was correct. Being answered in the affirmative, he requested them to follow him; he led the way to an emblazoned carriage, drawn by two magnificent horses.

"Mr. Berkeley sent it for you," said the liveried servant; and with wondering looks at each other, the brother and sister took their seats within the handsome vehicle.

Could that be their destination—that palatial edifice before which the carriage stopped? It was, for Berkeley himself, too impatient to wait, at the first sound of the wheels grating on the space before the house had come forth, and was descending the broad stone steps. Another moment, and he was embracing his brother and sister. He drew them within the house, so excited, so eager to tell them *his* news that he could hardly wait to hear their tidings; and when he heard, when he held the paper and saw upon it that blotted mark—the hand had been so weak that made it—when he read the signatures of the witnesses, he fell upon his knees and said aloud:

"My God! I thank Thee."

Rising, he told them how on the receipt of their telegram he had acquainted his father with the facts, and the suffering nobleman—already strangely softened because of that very suffering, and yearning, as he felt his death approaching, for another sight of his children—broke forth into joyful expressions at the unexpected news, acknowledging to Walter that for the last few days he had been struggling with himself to subdue his pride and send for them.

"I shall go to him now," said young Berkeley, "and tell him all; and in the meantime you can rest, and partake of some refreshment."

He rung for a servant to conduct his guests to separate suites of private apartments, and he repaired to Lord Heathcote. In a comparatively short time, however, he rejoined his brother and sister—his face aglow, his form so violently trembling that his very voice quivered:

"Come," he said, seizing a hand of each; "he knows all, and he is convinced—he yearns for you, he waits to clasp you both!"

Yes, there he stood in the center of his private apartment, actually standing, though his feeble strength had not permitted him to assume that position for days before—his arms outstretched, his stern face now softened to inimitable tenderness by suffering and the wild yearning of his long-pent heart, and his voice crying: "Come! my *children*—my *children!*" He encircled them both, he pressed each in turn to his heart, but it was to Marie his longest and fondest caress was given. "My darling! my darling!" he murmured; "it is as if my lost one had returned to me—my poor, injured, slandered lost one!"

His sudden strength gave way, and he was borne to his bed, but with his children about him: Marie's hand performing for him the tender offices she had so often performed for the sick and lonely poor.

With the next day came a transient return of strength, and while it lasted the nobleman *would* work. Lawyers and friends whose friendship he had tested, and whom he wanted now to serve as witnesses, came in obedience to his summons, and the story of his Irish marriage, with the legitimacy of his three children, and their right and heirship to his property, were for the first time given to the English public; then the matter of his will was settled—his title, with the bulk of the property, would descend to Walter, who was the elder twin brother; the remainder of the estate, comprising a much larger portion than Marie dreamed of, would be divided between her and Father O'Connor, now compelled to assume his true name of Berkeley. When all was completed Lord Heathcote laid his head on the pillow again with an air of intense relief.

Walter wrote a faithful account of all to the anxious dear ones in Dhrommacohol, adding that, as his father's death seemed so near, his guests would remain until the end.

The end did take place, but not as the young priest and Marie had devoutly prayed and wished—Lord Heathcote did not die a Catholic; though expressing himself satisfied that his children should be of the faith of their mother, he persisted in his determination to die in that creed in which he had been reared. So, even with his priestly son at his bedside tenderly holding one of his hands, the Episcopal clergyman came and read the prayers prescribed by the Church, and the old nobleman breathed forth his soul in one of his efforts to respond.

Carroll and Clare, now deeming it a duty to join their bereaved friends, arrived in London in time for the courtly funeral; and when the obsequies were over, and everything pertaining to the strange events which had been made public regarding Lord Heathcote's early life was arranged, then all turned their faces once more to Ireland.

CHAPTER LX.

CORNY O'TOOLE IS SATISFIED.

The little village of Dhrommacohol seemed to have lost its identity in the gala place which it had become—it was so utterly unlike its former staid, quiet self. Excitement ran so high within it, owing to the many strange events that were taking place—Miss Berkeley, regarded as the angel of the little district because of her kindness to the poor, turning out to be the daughter of an English lord, and about to wed young Carroll O'Donoghue, the darling and idol of all his tenantry; then Carroll's sister—equally loved with himself, though she was not noted for the gentleness which marked her friend, Marie,—about to marry Marie's brother, now bearing a title, and the possessor of a vast English estate, and better than all, reported to have become a Catholic in faith and practice. In addition to these startling facts, there was still another: that of Father O'Connor being now Father Berkeley, and the son, also, of this great English lord. People wondered somewhat if the wealth which report said was now his would make any difference in his simple style of living. In a little while they were answered: the aid which poured into every impoverished cabin, which provided for the sick and the ignorant, which lessened not a mite of the economy of his own household, told of one who in wealth, as in poverty, would follow in his Master's steps.

Both weddings were to take place on the same day. Father Meagher, assisted by Fathers Berkeley and McShane, was to perform the ceremony in the little parish chapel of Dhrommacohol; immediately after, the bridal parties were to start for London, in which city Walter Berkeley—now holding his

father's title of Lord Heathcote—and his wife, who would be Lady Heathcote, intented to make their home during certain seasons of the year.

So it was little wonder that the whole village of Dhrommacohol was aroused, and in such a state of joyous excitement that even old Ned Maloney, the miser, who was yet alive and pursuing his ostensible trade in his general shop, was noticed by parties who entered his dingy place to be more gracious than usual—it might be owing to the stir given by approaching events to even the little business he conducted. Disgusted and alarmed by the deception practiced upon him regarding the first and only race in which he had ever engaged, he had, on recovering his horse, availed himself of the first opportunity to sell the animal, and to discharge the groom, Arty Moore.

The only visage that was somewhat lengthy was that of Tighe a Vohr.

"Faith, Moira," he said one day, just a week before the eventful day of the weddings, "it's a burnin' shame, afther all me good behavior, that Father Meagher won't as much as tip me a wink to let me know that he's aware o' me impatience in this matther o' our coortship—he jist purtinds to be noticin' nothin'! an' the same toime sure the whole o' Dhrommacohol can see that I'm dyin' about you. Now it's hard to be thrated in this manner, an' I lave it to yersel', Moira, if I haven't been as sober, an' as dutiful, an' as attintive for the past two months as you'd wish me to be—haven't I left off all me wild thricks?"

"Indeed you have, Tighe!" said Moira warmly; "and I undertook to tell uncle something about it last night."

"An' what did he say, darlin'?" And Tighe leaned forward with bated breath to catch her answer.

"Why, he said that you hadn't been tested enough yet—that I must wait until you were more settled down, and until he could be sure that you would abstain from liquor."

Tighe leaned back in his chair, disappointed and crestfallen.

"Well now, that's moighty hard, wid me heart breakin' for you the way it is! but niver moind; it's far off God sinds, an' mebbe He'd sind a bit o' luck to us afore the wake is out."

His hope was realized, for on the evening of that same day, meeting Carroll and Clare together and unaccompanied —as on most other occasions they were,—by the young Lord Heathcote and Marie, Tighe stopped them to ask a favor.

"Granted before you ask it, Tighe," said Carroll laughingly, "even to the half of my estate, my faithful fellow!"

"No, Mr. O'Donoghue, it isn't anything loike that I want; it's to ax you to get something for me that will make me happier than the whole o' yer estate could do. You see, Masther Carroll, me heart is breakin' wid love o' Moira Moynahan, an' Father Meagher thinks I'm not shteady enough to get her, though I've been on me good behavior so shtrict that I didn't as much as give one crooked luk this while back. Now, mebbe if you'd give Father Meagher this characther o' me, an' at the same toime puttin' in a coaxin' word to hilp the matther, an' mebbe if Miss O'Donoghue would do the same, things would come roight for poor Moira an' me."

Carroll laughed heartily, and Clare joined him in the burst of merriment. "Why did you not tell me this before?" he said.

"Beikase I thought his riverince, seein' me efforts to do betther, an' me melancholy luks, would take pity on me, an' tell me from himsel' that I moight have Moira."

"Well, well, Tighe, make yourself content—I think I can manage it for you."

"Thank you, Masther Carroll; you were niver yet wantin' in settlin' a difficulty!" And Tighe a Vohr departed, so light-hearted that his joyful spirits would find vent in a merry refrain. That evening he was summoned to Father Meagher's study.

"Now, Tighe," said the priest, assuming a severity to make his words the more impressive, "if I consent to your marriage with my niece Moira, remember that I shall be confiding to you care the only, and to me the dearest, relic of my family; she is young and guileless, and unfit to cope with the trouble which an unsteady husband would bring upon her."

"I know that, yer riverince, but marriage'll make a man o' me." And Tighe a Vohr straightened himself, and looked with clear, frank eyes into the priest's face. "It will be the dearest task o' me loife, yer riverince, to protect ivery hair o' her head."

"Well, Tighe, if you will promise to be as true to her interests as you have been to those of your young master, Carroll O'Donoghue, I shall be satisfied."

"Oh, thin, I can shwear to that, yer riverince—you'll niver have cause to regret givin' Moira Moynahan to Tighe a Vohr!"

"Then God bless you, Tighe; and may He ever keep you faithful to Him!"

The priest's hand was raised in blessing, which Tighe, deeply affected, knelt to receive. Then Father Meagher said:

"Send Moira to me—I have something to say to her."

With a light heart he sought the young girl, and in the exuberance of his joy, when he had told her the good news, forgetting that he had not yet the right which alone would make Moira grant him the privilege, he would have caught her to him and pressed a kiss upon her forehead, but she, with instinctive delicacy, drew herself back:

"You forget, Tighe, we are not married yet."

"Thrue for you, darlin', an' I loike you the betther for yer modesty."

But when she had gone, and he was alone with Shaun, feeling that he must give vent somehow to his wild emotions, he caught up the dog, much to the animal's astonishment, and gave to it the embrace he would have fain bestowed on Moira.

"Shaun, agra! sure we were niver in such luck: marriage

afore us, an' oceans av joy! Oh, how'll we contain oursel's at all, at all?"

And Shaun was hugged until the poor brute, fond as he was of his master, fain would free himself.

Had Carroll O'Donoghue his wish, he would have had the wedding of Tighe a Vohr occur at the precise time of his own, but Father Meagher refused to have it so, saying that it would be better, and that the young couple themselves would prefer to have a very quiet ceremony when the other bridal parties had gone to London. So it was arranged; and the important day arrived on which four faithful hearts were to be united.

The ceremony was quiet and simple, devoid of showy costumes and magnificent wedding favors; the ostentation consisted rather in munificent gifts to the poor, in lavish hospitality to the tenantry; and true blessings went up from simple, earnest hearts, and grateful God-speeds, which bore an omen of good in the very manner of their utterance, followed the wedded couples.

Never were there two more beautiful brides—the very simplicity of their costumes enhancing physical charms which derived not a little of their beauty from the loveliness of the pure souls within.

Father Berkeley was the last to receive their adieus, and to his sister he turned for the final embrace. He held her to him; it was the first time his mortified heart would permit him so fond a caress.

"Marie!" he whispered, "to your noble sacrifice is due all our happiness. Heaven has well rewarded your devotion to duty. May He in whose footsteps you have sought to follow ever keep and guide you!"

One kiss upon her forehead, one more touch of his beloved hand, and he turned away, while she, weeping with joy and gratitude, stepped into the carriage in waiting.

The quiet little wedding ceremony which Father Meagher desired for his niece was performed, and Tighe's "best man"

had been Corny O'Toole. Tighe, however, had stipulated with Corny that he must permit himself to be dressed in accordance with Tighe's taste, and the latter man, too happy in the prospect of an opportunity to be near Mrs. Carmody, willingly assented. The result was that Corny appeared to better advantage than he ever had done before, although pretty Moira, excited as she was with joyful anticipation, could not help laughing at his odd little figure, and wrinkled, ill-featured face.

Cathleen Sullivan and Mrs Kelly, with fragile Bartley Donovan—the latter growing more fragile, and at the same time more beautiful every day—were also present, with many of Tighe's old friends and acquaintances.

At the repast which followed the ceremony, Father Meagher presided, and a merrier party had never assembled. In the midst of a temporary lull which had followed the ebullition of mirth caused by one of Father Meagher's excellent witty stories, the company were suddenly and amusingly electrified by Corny O'Toole—who had contrived to be seated next to Mrs. Carmody—rising and saying with his hand on his heart :

"Understand me, Mrs. Carmody ; I never meant to have you remove your affections from the cold grave of your lamented husband ; if it is any satisfaction, ma'am, to have them remain there, Corny O'Toole is not the man, no, Mrs. Mollie Carmody, Corny O'Toole is not the man to ask you to remove them !"

The words, the look, the attitude of the little man, together with Mrs. Carmody's flushed and indignant face, convulsed the assemblage. Roar after roar shook the table, in the midst of which Father Meagher's hearty laugh could be distinguished ; he remembered the episode of Mrs. Carmody's love-letter, and it made his mirth the heartier, while Tighe a Vohr, laughing as loudly as the rest, thought within himself :

"Poor Corny has proposed to me mother at last, an' I'm afeerd he's got his final answer."

Quiet was restored at length, and Mr. O'Toole humbly say-

ing that, as he now was convinced of Mrs. Carmody's sentiments, he would no longer annoy her by an offer of himself, that indignant lady consented to pardon him; and when he explained further to the company how the unbounded admiration which, from his earliest manhood, he held for Mistress Mollie Carmody, would descend unchanged with him to the grave, she deigned to be exceedingly friendly, thus cheering the little man's heart, and the perfect peace and pleasure of the party were restored.

On their short wedding trip to Tralee, Tighe and his pretty young bride were one day confronted in the street by a couple whose faces were familiar to Tighe, and the sight of which brought back some of the amusing incidents of his life. They were Joe Canty, the sporting man, and the fair, stout Widow Moore. Evidently from their manner to each other they were husband and wife; and Tighe, looking at them with a roguish twinkle, was met by a glance of haughty contempt from Canty.

"I supposed he learned all about the thrick I once played on him," said Tighe to Moira, "an' that's the rayson he gev suck a luk whin he passed." And thereupon Tighe told the whole story of the race which had resulted so disastrously for Mr. Canty, concluding with a humorous detail of the deception regarding the Widow Moore which he had practiced on the soldier Garfield, and Moira was so convulsed with laughter that she was obliged to lower her veil.

Weeks passed, marked by no sad event save the death of Bartley Donovan, and that was so like the end of some fair, youthful saint, that even those who loved him best could scarcely regret his demise. With his hand in Cathleen's, with his eyes fixed upon her face, he had said with one of his exquisite smiles:

"Do you think I shall see that Heaven you used to tell me so much about—and that dear God, and his blessed mother?"

His lips and his eyes had closed simultaneously with the utterance of the last words, and with one gentle sigh he had died.

Father Meagher, hardly thinking that the end was so near and yet prompted by a singular impulse, had brought him the *Viaticum* scarcely an hour before. Mrs. Kelly would no longer detain Cathleen from the desire of her heart—to consecrate herself to God in religion; and as the good woman herself had been offered a permanent and lucrative position in the home of Carroll O'Donoghue, and nothing now remained to keep the young girl, the latter gladly availed herself of the opportunity. Marie, or Mrs. O'Donoghue, on being told of Cathleen's desire, insisted on furnishing a munificent dower.

Mrs. Carmody had taken the place of Moira in Father Meagher's household, and Corny O'Toole was quietly living his old obscure life in Tralee; but he sometimes cheered himself by a visit to his Dhrommacohol friends.

Tighe and Moira were the happy owners of a pretty little home on the O'Donoghue domain, and Shaun, faithful Shaun, as devoted to his master as ever, had a most honored place in the household.

One morning the whole village was electrified by the news that Maloney, the miser, had been found dead in his bed. "Died widout praste or docther!" was the conclusion of every announcement of his death made by the simple folk, and accompanied by a look which told their horror of such an end. More money than even people dreamed he possessed was found in his wretched abode, and having no one to claim it, it reverted to the government.

We leave them all at last—the friends whose fortunes have accompanied so long—happy in the reward of that virtue which sacrificed no duty, and which never forgot its allegiance to Him who even in this world so lovingly rewards goodness, and so justly punishes crime.

FINIS.

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